



Safety~Net

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Vol. 4, Issue 2

What hope for the homeless?

According to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Continuum of Care applications for funding to agencies that provide transitional housing, permanent housing, and supportive services to homeless persons, in the past year there were approximately 8,000 individuals, including families, in Indiana who were homeless and living in shelters

or on the street. (See "A statewide effort to end homelessness" on p. 4) Of these 8000 people, approximately 240 were in the Bloomington area. These are minimum figures because they do not include homeless people living with friends or relatives, in garages, or in cars, and never get counted as part of the homeless population. Other estimates of the number of

homeless people in Indiana are as high as 80,000. (See "Domestic violence in and with homelessness" on p. 3). People who experience homelessness are a diverse population, and the factors that contribute to the danger of becoming homeless vary from person to person. The focus articles in this issue of Safety-Net are from agencies that are part of the community

effort to provide housing and supportive services for individuals and families who are homeless, or are in danger of becoming homeless. On April 6 the Homeward Bound Walk will draw attention to this part of our population, and raise money for local agencies that provide housing and supportive services.

Homelessness not a matter of choice

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By Cathi Norton, Community Relations Specialist, Center for Behavioral Health or substance abuse challenges.

If you had no home, where would you and your children stay? What if you got sick? What if you were mentally ill? National statistics on the homeless are no joke. About 600,000 families experience homelessness each year in the United States. Up to 200,000 of them are chronically (or repeatedly) homeless—1.35 million are children. No one ever plans to be homeless; no one is exempt from it. People become homeless for many reasons: finances, domestic violence, mental and physical illness, release from jails, or veterans discharged from service to name but a few. Nearly half of chronically homeless people suffer from mental health

These frightening statistics call to us to pay attention and help. Though funding is increasingly scarce, our citizens come together to help in different ways. One way is the annual Walk for the Homeless, scheduled this year on April 6th—Third Street Park. For more information, you can contact Vicki Provine, 812-349-3505 (provinev@bloomington.in.gov), or just sign up on the day of the event at the Juke Box Center in Third Street Park--Bloomington. Funds raised from this walk go to organizations that serve the homeless. Monies received by Center for Behavioral Health (CBH), for instance, go into a "Special Loan Fund" from which clients struggling to find or maintain a home can borrow money and repay it on a schedule set to their ability to do so.

Another local CBH service is the federally funded PATH (Project for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness) community outreach program. CBH's PATH program provides mental health screening and case management to at-risk and homeless persons by identifying them, visiting regularly with them to establish trusting relationships, and striving to transition them into receiving treatment services and/or housing. PATH at CBH currently has two people—Ibby Ambrose and Matt Sager—working with almost 300 people last year, approximately 80 of whom became clients and received mental health and case management services. Others who did not become CBH clients were guided toward other community social services resources. Ibby explains about the differences she's seen the program make:

See "CBH," page two



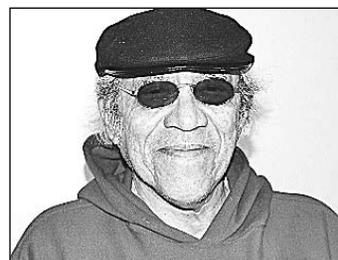
Editorial cartoon by Joe Lee.

Homeward Bound 5K: A community event

By Donna A. Graves, Executive Director Mental Health America, PR Chair, Homeward Bound Committee

On, Sunday, April 6, 2008, the Bloomington community will come together to host the sixth annual Homeward Bound 5K Walk to benefit and support homeless persons and families. The theme this year is "Will YOU walk?". Registration begins at 3rd Street Park at noon and continues

until 1:30. At 1:30 there will be a greeting and guest speakers to get everyone prepared and excited about the walk. At 2:00 pm the walk will begin and walkers will be entertained with music and educational signs along the way. Back at 3rd street Park it will be buzzing with activity. A children's area will let them get involved and help them begin to learn the importance of being involved in their community. Food and drink will be available for all participants. At 3:30 p.m. the walk ends back at 3rd



Abraham Morales will serve as spokesperson for this year's walk. See his biography on page three.

street Park and there will be awards presented to selected participants of the event.

This event is duplicated all over the state of Indiana. Please visit our web site at www.homelesswalks.org to see where the other walks are talking place in the Indiana. The web site will give additional information about all the walks in the state. Most importantly the site will accept your generous donation. This event takes place in an effort to raise much needed funds to support

local agencies who work with the homeless population and work towards ending homelessness in our community.

Who are these agencies working to provide housing and fight homelessness in Bloomington? There are 13 agencies who will each be receiving a portion of the money donated to the walk.



See "Walk," page two

This publication is made possible by the financial support of the City of Bloomington.

Usted habla Español?

Paginas 24-27 tiene los artículos bilingües:

- Noticias del Centro de Recursos Familiares de Templeton – Shalom
- Lenguas Evolucionan
- Enfermedades del Corazón
- Usted necesita declarar los Impuestos?
- Y mas!

Walk

Continued from page one

100% of the money raised will be given to the designated agencies. They are Amethyst House, Area 10 Agency on Aging, Center for Behavioral Health, Community Kitchen, Hoosier Hills Food Bank, Martha's House, Mental Health America, Middle Way House, Monroe County United Ministries, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, Shalom Community Center, Stepping Stones, Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County.

Why is it that in this day and age we

are having to talk about men, women and children in our community who do not have a regular, reliable place to call home? 18,000 people in Indiana will experience homelessness in any given year. There are 20,095 Monroe County residents who live below 100% of the federal poverty level. Our community is unique in that Monroe County's housing costs are among the highest in the state while our median income is among the lowest. Think about this...on any night over 200 people are sleeping in our homeless shelters. How many more do you think are

under our bridges or in the woods afraid to become one of the counted?

The issue of homelessness is here and it is today and it is now. Please go to www.homelesswalksindiana.org and choose a way to help with this event. You can sponsor a walker by pledging your financial support, you can donate your time and energy by helping to organize on the day of the walk and help us make the day go smoothly, and most importantly you can walk and get your friends co-workers and neighbors to both walk with you and to support you with money. In addition,

Don't forget!

What: Homeward Bound 5K Walk
When: April 6, 2008; Sign up at NOON, walk at 2 p.m.
Where: Third (3rd) Street Park in Bloomington
WHY: To fight homelessness in our community.

you or your team can elicit donations from businesses, churches, clubs, school classes and corporations. Remember, 100% of these donations go directly to the participating agencies.

CBH

Continued from page one

"I love it; it's one of the few positions in our organization that has the flexibility to work with people who don't have insurance. There's a lot of room to make a big difference in an individual's life because services are so intensive. A typical case would be if someone is on the streets, actively psychotic, and getting in trouble." Ibbby or Matt try to connect and get to know them.

"People want to talk to you," says Ibbby. "You have to spend time with them—even the homeless who don't turn out to be mentally ill—because they are your best

"I love it; it's one of the few positions

Ibbby Ambrose is quick to point out that "most homeless people are only homeless for a short time and are not chronically homeless" - another sign that homelessness can quickly befall anyone.

referral sources! They know each other; they know what's going on WAY better than other social service organizations can." She feels one of PATH's strengths is that it doesn't just address one problem, but a "wide range of problems for a narrow population" (the homeless), "... but that's a population that won't get help for themselves."

Ambrose can only guess at the number of homeless in Bloomington, but she feels that the 300 they've seen are only a percentage of the homeless here.

"Most homeless people are only homeless for a short time and are not chronically homeless." She laughs and reflects that the government has names like "under-housed," or "precariously housed," for them. Yet being even temporarily homeless can be profoundly impactful, precipitating physical illness or mental distress.

In addition to venturing out into the community to seek out the homeless, PATH workers have hours at Bloomington's Shalom Center each week—Wednesdays from 11 a.m. until about 2:00 p.m.; Fridays from 9-10:00



a.m. (or until they are no longer needed), and CBH provides a "walk-in" clinic for the homeless each Thursday from 1-2:00 p.m.

All people matter, and nothing demonstrates that as well as a system of care and adequate resources to help those in need. In hard times, there's nothing that builds hope more than a helping hand. We in Bloomington are fortunate because our com-

munity continues to offer that hand-up. Please learn, and spread the word about homelessness and the ways everyone can make a difference. Everyone matters; let's help everyone remember it.

Quiz Time! Test your knowledge

1. What is Homeward Bound and its relationship to the homeless population, and why is it important that you take part? See the article about Homeward Bound on p. 1.

2. Who are the people experiencing homelessness in the Bloomington community, why are they homeless? How do CBH and Martha's House help? See the article from CBH on p. 1, and the article from Martha's House on p. 4.

3. How many homeless people are there in Indiana and in Bloomington? What is the role of ICHHI in addressing this issue? See the article from ICHHI on p. 4.

4. What is the relationship between domestic violence and homelessness. How does Middle Way House help? See the article from Middle Way on p. 3.

5. What is the Housing Network? How is it involved in addressing housing needs in Bloomington? See the article from the South Central Housing Network on p. 9.

6. How do Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, the Community Kitchen, and the Shalom Center address the need to feed individuals, including families, of little or no income? See the articles from Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and the Community Kitchen on p. 7, and the Shalom Center on p. 11.

7. How does the Salvation Army reach out to provide for families of low income? See the article from the Salvation Army on p. 5.

8. What was the experience of a college stu-

dent living homeless on the streets of Indianapolis for one week? See the article by Kyle Walke on p. 6.

9. What programs are there for homeless youth in Bloomington? See the article about Stepping Stones and the Youth Services Bureau on p. 5 and 6.

10. What is the Luna Festival, and how does it relate to Women Inspire, Girls Inc., Middle Way House, and Fair Trade? See the article on p. 10.

11. What is the Student Global AIDS Campaign? See the article on p. 10.

12. Do you know what the America Reads program is? Find out on p. 13.

13. Do you know about some of the available programs at the Shalom Community Center, MCPL, the YMCA, Big Brothers Big Sisters, Boys and Grils Club, and other programs for Bloomington youth? Find out on pp. 13-15.

14. What do people "seldom heard" have to say about their lives and problems they must overcome? See p 28.

15. What is happening at the jail with respect to the Theater Program, Women Writing for (a) Change, programs to help inmates change their lives, and the Crossroads program for released inmates? See p. 16-21.

16. What are the volunteer opportunities in Bloomington? Find out on p. 22.

About Safety-Net

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Safety-Net is a free quarterly community newspaper produced by the Shalom Community Center in Bloomington, Indiana, a daytime shelter for those experiencing homelessness and/or poverty, with the cooperation of the other social service non-profit agencies as well as by departments of the City of Bloomington, and Monroe County. Printing is funded by the City of Bloomington. Previous issues can be accessed at www.shalomcommunitycenter.org.

FOCUS ARTICLE

Each issue of Safety-Net has articles focused on a particular topic that affects those in need in our community. This issue is focused on programs to ensure housing for individuals and families of low income.

AGENCY REPORTS

Each issue of Safety-Net has articles contributed from the many non-profit/social service agencies in the Bloomington area about programs and services that they provide, as well as volunteer opportunities.

AGENCY GUIDE

There is an extensive Agency Guide pointing out where specific services/programs are available and how to access them.

SPECIAL SECTIONS

Each issue has Special Sections. The Special Sections in this issue include sections on Criminal Justice Programs, Volunteer Opportunities, Hispanic/Latino events, Voices Seldom Heard, and Youth Programs.

WE WELCOME COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS. Please send these to the editor at white@indiana.edu, sign your name, and indicate whether you would like your comments to be published.

Morales in unique position to speak for walk

By Scott Leadingham

At the Shalom Center, Abraham Morales is known as an extremely helpful and friendly volunteer. Around Bloomington, he might be recognized as a gifted harmonica player, often being seen in the areas surrounding Kirkwood Avenue. It seems that everywhere he goes, Abraham is met with the same reaction: What a nice guy!

This is an understatement.

Whether he's playing harmonica for interested passersby, volunteering in the kitchen of the Shalom Center, or greeting visitors at the Center's front desk, two notable attributes – a beaming smile and a humble sense of gratitude – always seem to follow Abraham.

Although he and his son, Joshua, are no longer homeless -- thanks to the efforts of the Shalom Center and the Bridges program -- Abraham is a regular figure at the Shalom Center.

"Josh and I were homeless in Bloomington for about a year and a half," he says. "We'd sleep on the steps of a church with sleeping bags loaned to us by Shalom. That's why I still want to volunteer. I want to give back because the Shalom Center and other programs helped us."

Aside from the help of Shalom, Abraham and Josh have received housing support from Bridges, a federally-funded housing program administered locally by Martha's House, a participating agency of Bloomington's Homeward Bound walk. Without the assistance of these organizations and programs, Abraham admits that life would be incredibly difficult, which is why he seems so grateful for their services and willing to give back.

"Too many people are wrapped up in themselves. It's always 'me me me' instead of thinking of others and how to give back to the community. That's why I volunteered [at Shalom Center] in the kitchen and why I continue to volunteer at the front desk."

Abraham's situation also highlights a growing trend in our country, one that Joel Rekas, Shalom Center's Executive Director, calls "an absolute national tragedy." As a Vietnam veteran, one who served for 13 months and five days, Abraham is formerly one of 400,000 veterans that experience homelessness at some point during the year, a number estimated by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs. This statistic, for Abraham, hits particularly close to home, and he believes that more should be done for veterans who served overseas.

"It would be good if Indiana supported veterans a little more. The ones who are homeless need a place to go besides the VA Hospital."

Luckily for Abraham, Shalom Center and the social service resources in the Bloomington area have stepped in where the Veteran's Administration and the state have come up short.

In the absence of organizations such as Shalom Center and Martha's House, Abraham admits that he might not have the resources or ability to stay in the Bloomington area, a thought he seems to bemoan.

"The programs and shelters around Bloomington are top-notch. The services, facilities, and even the mindsets of the people are very welcoming and helpful, which I can't say for other cities I've lived in."

This is a sentiment that Joel Rekas admits he doesn't want certain people in Bloomington to hear, as there is a mindset among some members of the community that various social problems would disappear if organizations like Shalom Center didn't operate.

"Some segments of the community believe that homeless individuals wouldn't be in Bloomington if there weren't organizations like the Shalom Center to attract them," says Rekas. This line of thinking, to Rekas, is extremely inaccurate. "The need is always going to be there," he says.

That need continues to be met for individuals like Abraham. If it had not been, however, Abraham says he and Josh might have left Bloomington and gone south, possibly to Kentucky – where they came from originally – or New Orleans.

In retrospect, though, Abraham is grateful that he and Josh have been able to stay in Bloomington, especially in light of the fallout from Hurricane Katrina.

When speaking of New Orleans, there's a particular hint of delicacy and remembrance in Abraham's voice, as if a flood of nostalgia affrights his senses. This is understandable, as it was the city in which he learned how to play his heart on the harmonica.

In 1974, Abraham was in New Orleans during the time leading up to and following the annual Mardi Gras celebration. He encountered a street performer named T-Bone who taught Abraham how to play the harmonica.

"I sat there for almost six hours just listening to him. That's how I learned to play. To this day I don't know how to read music. I just need to listen to it because it's a feeling inside of you, not notes printed on a page."

And for someone that doesn't formally read music, Abraham is in pretty good company.

"After Bob Dylan came to IU last year, I even had some students come up to me and say that my harmonica playing sounds better than his. He's a little sloppy."

When remembering T-Bone, his free-form harmonica teacher, Abraham appears slightly sentimental, as if remembering a long lost friend.

"I went back to New Orleans one time and heard that T-Bone had died, right out on the street where he'd been since he was nearly 12 years old."

Thanks to the generous support of organizations like Shalom Center and Martha's House, that won't happen to Abraham, which is perhaps why he's so gracious for everything he and Joshua have received.

Domestic violence linked to homelessness

By Ashlyn McNeal, Legal Advocacy Volunteer, Middle Way House

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According to the National Alliance to End Homelessness, domestic violence is the immediate cause of homelessness for many women. A report from the Indiana Family and Social Services Administration, indicates there are 88,000 homeless people in the state, including adults, youths, and children, one of every five of whom was identified as a victim of domestic violence. When researchers with the Family Violence Prevention Fund surveyed homeless women, they found that 92 percent had experienced severe physical and sexual assault at some time

in their lives.

Middle Way House is a safe haven for battered women and their families in Bloomington, Indiana. Liz Kirkland, currently Middle Way's Children's Advocate and an employee for over 20 years, says that homelessness among women and children is linked to domestic violence.

"When a woman has to flee her home to be safe from her abuser, she becomes homeless," Kirkland said. "Even if she has income, it most often isn't enough to provide for herself and her children because she has to start from scratch, replacing everything she had to leave behind when she fled."

Kirkland said that there are things that

Many research studies have shown that domestic violence is the most frequently stated cause of homelessness among women and children.

really need to change to help reduce the rate of homelessness among those who experience domestic violence. Among them is the lack of affordable housing, a particular problem in our community.

Kirkland said that women often stay in abusive relationships because they can't afford to live anywhere else. They also return to dangerous homes after staying in a shelter for that reason.

As Liz Hannibal, Woman's Advocate for Middle Way House states, "A lot of shelters put time limits on the women who stay there. Sometimes the limit is thirty days. What makes Middle Way so great is

that we don't do that. The women can stay as long as it takes to find an appropriate, affordable place to live."

Middle Way House serves survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault with a variety of housing options, including emergency shelter, transitional and income-sensitive permanent rental housing. Supportive services help survivors transition from danger and economic dependency to safety and self-determination.

Those wanting more information or wishing to help are encouraged to visit the agency's website at www.middleway-house.org.

A statewide effort to end homelessness

By Tommy Tabor, Director of Community Relations, Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless issues, Inc. (ICHHI)

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Thirty years ago there was not widespread homelessness in Indiana. Today, there are homeless and near-homeless individuals living in every county in the state. Based on a statewide homeless count that was conducted on January 25, 2007, there were nearly 8,000 homeless individuals living in shelters or on the streets in Indiana. To make matters worse, this large estimate does not take into consideration the number of people who are homeless and staying with friends and relatives or living in motels. Of these 8,000 homeless Hoosiers, 19% live on the streets; 34% are families with children; 16% have been victims of domestic violence; 26% have chronic substance abuse issues; 6% suffer from mental illness issues; 27% are located in Indianapolis; and 3% are located in the Bloomington area.

Recognizing a need for a unified and concerted effort to streamline programs and services for Indiana residents working

towards self-sufficiency, a group of service providers and advocates from around the state formed the Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues (ICHHI) in 1988. ICHHI is a statewide non-profit membership based organization that is dedicated to ensuring that every Hoosier has a safe place to call home, a safety net of social services, and a path to self-sufficiency. For nearly twenty years, ICHHI has been working to build stronger individuals, families and communities through planning, research, education and advocacy.

ICHHI primarily serves organizations that assist homeless individuals, create affordable housing opportunities, and administer economic self-sufficiency programs. ICHHI's membership roster includes emergency, transitional, and supportive housing providers; non-profit housing development corporations; community-based organizations; local units of government; religious organizations; financial institutions; and people who support economic fairness. ICHHI serves its members through the following programs, projects, and activities:

Advocacy and Public Policy

ICHHI engages in a variety of advocacy activities and initiatives aimed at promot-



Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues
Building Stronger Individuals, Families, and Communities Through
Planning, Research, Education, and Advocacy.

ing progressive public policies in Indiana. In partnership with its lobbyists, ICHHI monitors legislative issues and policies that impact low-income Hoosiers and provides testimony in support or opposition of these measures. In addition, ICHHI sends out periodic legislative updates and action alerts to encourage our members to get involved in the legislative process. ICHHI also creates, promotes, and works through grass roots campaigns. ICHHI has played a vital role in the development and financing of the state's Affordable Housing and Community Development Trust Fund, passing and expanding a state Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), expanding the state's school breakfast program, increasing funding for Neighborhood Assistance Program (NAP) Credits, and passage of various landlord/tenant reforms.

Homeward Bound

Homeward Bound, a project of ICHHI, is a series of annual walks that take place

in communities throughout the state during the month of April. Since its inception in 2003, Homeward Bound has raised nearly \$2,000,000 for over 90 affordable housing and homeless service providers around the state, making it Indiana's largest grassroots fundraiser with the ultimate goal of ending homelessness.

Hoosier Management Information System (HMIS)

The Hoosier Management Information System (HMIS) is a secure, electronic, web-based data collection system that tracks the nature and scope of human service needs. Human service providers use HMIS as an intake, case management, and reporting tool to better understand the needs of the clients they serve. ICHHI is responsible for the implementation of the HMIS for Indiana (excluding Marion County).

See "ICHHI," page five

Martha's House provides for the homeless

By Bobbie Summers, Executive Director of Martha's House, Inc.

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Martha's House provides temporary housing and case management

Martha's House is an emergency shelter providing temporary housing for adults experiencing homelessness. The organization's twenty-eight bed facility shares a building with Community Kitchen and is located at South Rogers. In addition to emergency housing, the shelter provides case management designed to support clients as they identify their needs and develop strategies for stabilizing their lives. Because many of the residents staying in the shelter work (65.5% in 2007), weekly case management is offered during the afternoon and evening to eliminate possible schedule conflicts that could disrupt work commitments and compromise clients' employment.

Circumstances leading to homelessness vary

In 2007, Martha's House provided 8,491 nights of shelter to adults living in Monroe, Owen, and Lawrence counties. Who are these people finding their way to Martha's House? There is sometimes a misconception that those experiencing homelessness are in fact part of a homogenous group with a simple, manageable solution to fix their plight...employment. Those staying in shelter were not always unemployed, but were often underemployed and vulnerable to the slightest changes in their circumstances to find themselves in crisis. In fact, the circumstances leading to their stays at Martha's House were unique to each person served and included veterans (20%), women (22%), individuals recovering from debilitating illnesses and surgery, with mental illness, physical disabilities, or recovering from substance abuse (33%) or on probation after being released from jail (20%). Many of the women and men living in shelter face multiple issues as they work to rebuild their lives.

Permanent housing for homeless individuals and families through Bridge

Program

In addition to emergency shelter, Martha's House now provides permanent supportive housing through its Bridges program. The program began providing services in 2006 after the agency received HUD funds. The Bridges program includes extended housing support and case management for families vulnerable to becoming homeless and for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness.

For families to be eligible for the program the head-of-household must have a disabling condition that has disrupted employment. Families participating may choose to remain in their existing neighborhoods as long as their housing does not exceed rent-cost guidelines established by HUD. This flexibility in location helps families through a difficult transition with minimal disruption to school age children. Parents participate in weekly case management meetings to identify the needs of their family and to develop strategies to support financial stability.

Adults eligible for the program must be chronically homeless as defined by HUD i.e. have been homeless for twelve months

or have been homeless at least four times in a three-year period and have a chronic condition that limits employment. The Bridges program helps transition individuals into their own housing while still maintaining needed support systems.

Martha's House adheres to HUD formulated benchmarks designed to determine program effectiveness in stabilizing the lives of individuals and families experiencing homelessness.

These benchmarks include:

- Forty percent of those completing the program should transition to transitional or permanent housing. In 2007, Martha's House moved seventy two percent of those in the program for at least 30 days to transitional or permanent housing.
- Eighty per cent of those served for at least seven days should receive case management at least once. Ninety-one percent of Martha's House participants receive case management.
- Fifty percent of those served should find employment or increase wages. Currently, fifty-one percent of Martha's House participants find employment or increase wages.

Alleviating risk through empowering families

By Peter Iversen, Community Relations & Volunteer Coordinator, Salvation Army of Monroe County

Salvation Army

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Poverty and the threat of homelessness affect many people in Monroe County.

The threat of homelessness is unique in a Big Ten community ballooning with students. While rental prices increase and more luxury apartments are being built, local households are feeling the pinch. Even middle class families find themselves slipping towards insecurity. The Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) defines affordability as paying 30% or less towards housing, noting that cost burdened households “may have difficulty affording necessities such as food, clothing, transportation and medical care”. The data from Bloomington shows that these households are numerous. Forty seven percent of renters in Monroe County pay 35% or more of their income towards housing according to the American Community Survey. Further evidence suggests that this strain on households is strong. One out of five (21%) of middle class households have less than \$100 to spend after paying their bills every week. This cost burden multiplies for households with children. That’s why the Salvation Army has worked with other community agencies for over 100

years to help alleviate the risk of homelessness and poverty through efforts to empower families in need.

In some cases, services to families can help provide an additional barrier to the threat of homelessness. In Monroe County over 15% of children are growing up in poverty, and even when a parent holds a job, it is difficult to make ends meet. 33% of children growing up in poverty in Indiana have a parent employed full time. The Salvation Army’s youth programs aim to help these families because job security alone will not prevent a major expenditure from rendering a household without a home. Therefore, it is important that parents receive back to school kits, coats when the weather turns cold or a food basket that provides a nutritious dinner. In our community, a comprehensive approach to providing economic stability to parents is a cornerstone of what The Salvation Army does.

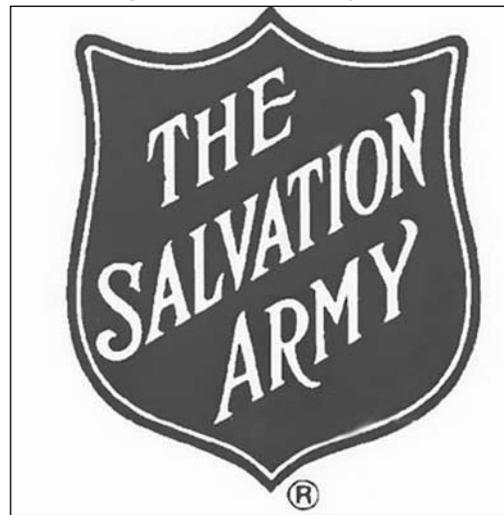
Youth Programs

The Bloomington Salvation Army’s youth programs assist families through comprehensive child care: nutrition, education, character building and affordable fees. This reduces the strain on local households, because while these programs exist, guardians have the opportunity to work and/or obtain further education to make them more competitive in the job

market, while at the same time providing valuable services at a low cost.

Child Care Connection

The Salvation Army’s Child Care Connection offers fees on a sliding scale based on household income. Through this program, parents of infants through preschoolers have the opportunity to leave their children at a convenient location. Accepting CASEY vouchers and offering free, nutritious meals to enrolled children, the Child Care Connection offers children’s guardians the ability to work or attend classes with necessary financial assistance. Similarly, the Salvation Army’s After School Adventures provides the same quality care for elementary school children so that parents can continue to work and not worry about their children or the cost of after-school care paying only \$1.10 per week. The children also receive daily help with their homework in a positive, encouraging environment that gives them the confidence to succeed.



Thrift Store

Offering working families tools is a proactive way to help reduce the threat of homelessness. A classic example of this service is the Salvation Army’s Thrift Store which works in partnership with the Monroe County township trustees

to provide opportunities to work in return for assistance from the trustee. As an added benefit, those clients may then also apply for assistance with The Salvation Army’s social service offices for clothes, medical referrals, or food for the household. Giving families the tools they need is our way of showing brotherly love.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. summed up this approach when he preached, “In our quest to make neighborly love a reality, we have, in addition to the inspiring example of the good Samaritan, the magnanimous life of our Christ to guide us. His altruism was universal, for he thought of all men, even publicans and sinners, as brothers.”

Stepping Stones: Giving youth a second chance

By Erin Marshall & Linsay Riddle, AmeriCorp Vista volunteers for Stepping Stones

“How does it feel to be out on your own with no direction home, like a complete unknown, like a rolling stone?” These well-known Bob Dylan lyrics have inspired the theme for Stepping Stones’s Homeward Bound teams this spring.

Think back to your own experience as an adolescent. How might your life be different now if you had not had the opportunities and support that you were blessed with as a young person? If you have to leave your

home due to abuse, disagreements with parents, because your family would lose Section 8 housing, or for another reason entirely out of your control, as a homeless adolescent you would be faced with difficult decisions and few options. Maybe you couch surf for a few weeks, staying with various friends. Eventually, this may very well take a toll on your ability to perform in school as well as your physical, mental, and emotional health. The combination of

an unstable living environment and external influences like peer pressure may lead you to make poor decisions which could lead you to find yourself in trouble with the law.

Many youth, however, find a new opportunity through probation officers, judges, and detention centers. Homeless teens in Bloomington may have more options than those in many other cities, but youth are still an underserved and overlooked part of

the population in most areas.

There are only two agencies in Bloomington that specifically serve youth experiencing homelessness, and combined, their maximum capacity is only 21 youth – Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County (YSB) can accommodate 15 youth aged 8 to 17, and Stepping Stones can house six youth aged 16-20.

See “Stepping Stones,” page six

ICHHI

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IndianaHousingNow.org

IndianaHousingNow.org

org is a free online searchable database that lists affordable and accessible housing for rent and sale across the state of Indiana, linking those searching for affordable housing with those who have such housing available. On behalf of the state of Indiana, ICHHI serves as the fiscal agent for the maintenance and deployment

of this system.

Institute for Working Families

The Institute for Working Families is a program of ICHHI that advocates on behalf of Hoosier families who struggle to achieve and maintain economic self-sufficiency. With the generous support of the Joyce Foundation, the Institute has been successful in developing and distributing thoughtful research to successfully advocate on behalf of working Hoosier

families.

Statewide Conference on Housing and Community Economic Development

The Statewide Conference on Housing and Community Economic Development is a joint annual conference that ICHHI hosts in partnership with the Indiana Housing Community Development Authority (IHCDA) and the Indiana Association for Community Economic Development (IACED). Each year, over

600 attendees from every facet of the community development industry are in attendance.

Technical Assistance

ICHHI works with local communities to conduct needs assessments, complete feasibility studies, and create community plans. These predevelopment activities enable local communities to seek and obtain state and federal funding for community development related projects and services.

Spring Break, Destination: Homelessness

By Kyle Walke

Kyle Walke is an IUPUI graduate student in social work.

Last March it was spring break. Most students were soaking up the sun, partying on nice warm beaches, or lounging in crystal clear waters somewhere down south. In Indianapolis it was cold, rainy, and windy. Just off I-65 and 13th street there was a 24 year old man holding a sign that read, "Homeless, Please Help God Bless You." The young man looked dejected, depressed, dirty, and disheartened. I know because that homeless young man was myself.

I was not homeless in the sense you may be thinking. I am not an alcoholic, nor do I have a mental disability, and I had not even fallen on hard times. I was homeless by choice. Homelessness is an issue that continues to be an escalating problem. In fact, the more I thought about homelessness the more I realized that when I was a teenager I could have lost everything. My parents divorced and money was exceptionally tight. To this day I am grateful that I have

such a wonderful extended family that helped us in every way possible until we were stable. However without that additional support, my mother, my brother, and myself would have had to find a shelter to stay in. I was homeless, because I believe that anyone given the right set of bad circumstances can become homeless. I wanted to learn everything I could and I want to teach anyone that will listen.

Therefore, for one week during spring break I lived on the streets of Indianapolis. I took no money and received no help from my family or friends. I started with only the clothes on my back. My friends videotaped my experience and I am currently making a documentary to educate others. Each day I gave myself a challenge that is related to homelessness.

Day 1: Find Shelter. I began my day by walking around for a while, bored honestly, and then I headed over to Wheeler Mission. Men's shelters can be an extremely intimidating place. Many of the guests

Men's shelters can be an extremely intimidating place... I did not sleep a minute that night. I honestly was too afraid. I was paranoid someone would come after me. Every little noise became a terrifying uncertainty in the darkness of the room.

- Graduate student Kyle Walke on his experience in an Indianapolis men's shelter

there have been arrested for violence, drug use, or theft. It is not uncommon for fights to break out. I stayed to myself. After I checked in I walked to put my bag in the storage room. I noticed that behind me was a room full of people, but yet the storage room was small and consisted of trash bags full of clothes and an occasional suitcase. It was sad for me to think that these men's entire lives were stored here. I had dinner and then went to chapel. Attending service is a requirement, in fact every men's shelter in Indianapolis is faith based. It is rumored that in one mission you have to actually sleep on a church pew. After the sermon we were called by number to the showers. This was the hardest part for me. As we stood there in line waiting, naked and cold, I felt completely alone. I

had nothing and I felt like nothing. I did not sleep a minute that night. I honestly was too afraid. I was paranoid someone would come after me. Every little noise became a terrifying uncertainty in the darkness of the room. This was the end of day one, only six more to go.

Each day was a completely different experience from the last. There were times I thought I would quit, there were times when I was honestly was afraid for my life, and then there were times that completely re-inspired my faith in the goodness of mankind.

If you would like to know more about my film, "Homeless in Hoosierville," please contact me at hoosierville@gmail.com. Or visit my website www.hoosierfilms.com.

YSB presents an unfortunately familiar scenario

By David Torneo, Clinical Coordinator

Youth Services Bureau
615 S. Adams Street
(812) 349-2506

The following is written in the single voice of a youth but it's more or less an amalgam of voices gathered from all those who have been Youth Shelter residents or have sought assistance from direct care staff and counseling staff over the last several years. The experiences described are relatively common but often difficult to imagine for most of us. The events that follow have been written to help us understand what a youth might encounter when they find themselves suddenly homeless with little if any family support.

I'd been living with my girl friend Molly and her family, her mom, her mom's boy friend, my girl friend's brother, Cody, and about a million cats and a dog named Chester. Things were going fine for about a year until my girl friend got pregnant and then sick and then she lost the baby at the hospital. Her mom wanted me to get a job and contribute to the household. I was working already, and I still am, but not enough I guess. It was so crowded in the house with the dog Chester and all the cats, and Stella, that's my girl friend's mom, snooping into everyone's business and bitching about every little thing. I was sorry about Molly and the baby we didn't get to have, but it's probably best because Molly's 16 and I'm

19 and I just couldn't stand being in that crazy house. It was like a loony bin. And Cody, I thought he was my friend, never stuck up for me and they ended up kicking me out. Stella said I was cheating on Molly because she said she saw another girl's picture on my MySpace. They gave me no warning, nothing. It was freezing outside, ice on the roads, and I have no car, and my bicycle was stolen months ago. That's when I piled on about half the clothes I own and walked real fast to the Youth Shelter. I stayed at the Youth Shelter three or four times when I was younger. I'd been in some trouble back then. I got in a fight with my dad when he got rough with Mom. I slugged him a couple of times and then he threw me out. I didn't go to school for about a month after that, just wandered around town and hung out in the library. I'd sleep at a friend's or sneak back into my house when my parents were asleep then leave out my window before they saw me. Eventually I got arrested for stealing a package of ham from a Stop and Slop. Then I got put on probation for truancy. Things with my dad never got any better. I mouthed off to him one night and he called the police. They cuffed me and took me to the Youth Shelter. That's how this whole thing got started. It was a failure to com-

municate. I heard that once in a movie and that fits this whole mess to a tee.

Like I said, I'm 19 now and I can't stay at the Youth Shelter anymore. But I went to talk to the staff there and they helped me find a place to stay for a little while. A counselor let me stash my backpack in her office and then she called Martha's House and scheduled a time for me to talk with someone. I had to go to Martha's House at 4:30 pm to talk with someone who would let me know how long I could stay and what I had to do when they were closed. They told me I could stay for a few months and they would help me save money so I could get a place of my own. It didn't matter to them that I worked at a fast food place on the East side of town. Sometimes I don't get off work until 1:00 am and then I have to find a ride from one of the guys I work with because the buses stop running before I finish closing the place. But the Martha's House staff is just glad that I'm working and trying to put some money away.

I also put in an application at Stepping Stones. The counselor at the Youth Shelter printed out the application from her computer for me. She answered a few questions about the program and delivered the form to the director, Sheri Benham.

I think I'm on the right track.

Stepping Stones

Continued from page five

These agencies offer youth in the

Bloomington area an opportunity to create a more successful future. For younger adolescents, the desired result may be a peaceful and positive reuniting with parents, and YSB can help in the transition to this being possible. For older youth, the desire may be to gain independence and learn to live on one's own. Stepping Stones guides youth through the steps necessary to complete this transition while

equipping residents with valuable knowledge and skills to help them to become productive members of society.

These agencies, along with the eleven others participating in Homeward Bound, are working for the hungry and homeless population of Bloomington to provide people with direction home. With your help, we can provide assistance and guidance to those youth in need in our community. Please go to the Homeward Bound website at www.homewardboundindiana.org/bloomington and make a contribution.

Two agencies fight hunger through meals, groceries

MHC: Your cupboard away from home

By Brooke Gentile, Executive Director, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

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www.mhcfoodpantry.org

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC) is a community food pantry organized around the belief that all people, regardless of economic status, deserve access to food that will benefit their health. Our mission is to provide wholesome, healthful foods to people in need, as well as nutrition and gardening education to build a healthier, more self-sustaining and self-sufficient community. This is why we stock healthy foods in our pantry, grow

My family appreciates all the food we get at Mother Hubbard's Cupboard because I'm disabled and my mom's elderly. Food stamps just do not last us. We get a lot of good milk, bread, eggs, cottage cheese, and vegetables, things we wouldn't buy because they are too expensive. We appreciate this place so very much. Thank you.

-MHC patron

organic vegetables in our gardens, and teach about healthy cooking.

Food Pantry Program

In the past year, as the face of hunger grows to include more of our neighbors who are elderly, children, the working poor, and those with disabilities, MHC has also grown to provide 20% more client services. Hunger is a serious problem in the Bloomington community.

With an 18.9% poverty rate in Monroe

County, it is clear that many families need assistance in meeting their basic needs.

Eighty-five percent of Mother Hubbard's Cupboard's clients have incomes of less than 30% of our area median income. MHC is Bloomington's largest food pantry, currently serving 1,450 clients each week, a third of whom are children.

In 2007 MHC distributed 700,000 pounds of food for a total of 75,017 client visits.

See "Cupboard," page eight



Volunteer and patron, Tora, stocks a refrigerator at MHC before the food pantry opens at 4pm.

Community Kitchen: Your kitchen away from home

By Caroline Daly, SPEA Service Corps Fellow

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Inc. is celebrating its 25th year serving free, nutritious meals to anyone in need with no fees or eligibility requirements. Wholesome dine in and carryout meals are available from our two locations on 917 South Rogers and 1100 West 11th street six days a week, 52 weeks a year. In 2007, 57,890 meals were served from our Rogers St. location and 35,506 meals at our 11th St. "Express" location. Surveys collected in house indicate that 86% of patrons are city residents.

In addition to our free meals program,

CK works to serve the most vulnerable in our community. The Kitchen provides two healthy meals daily, for chronically ill clients of Positive Link, through our Nutrition Links program. In addition, 27% of the meals prepared at the Kitchen (47,179) go to seniors.

Programs Serving Children: Backpack Buddies, Feed Our Future, Summer Meals

The Kitchen strives to reach children in our community who are in need of food. The success of our efforts is clear;

in 2007 41% of the meals served by CK went to children totaling 61,848 meals. Three CK programs specifically target children.

In our Backpack Buddies Program, a program sponsored by the Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County, CK works in conjunction with school counselors to send backpacks of food home with selected elementary school children on Friday afternoons. The food in these backpacks includes easy to prepare meals that help the children's families with food needs over the week-

end. Now in its third year, the Backpack Buddies Program serves children in three different local schools: Fairview Elementary, Summit Elementary, and Arlington Heights Elementary. In 2007, the Kitchen increased the number of backpacks distributed to children to a total of 1,704 backpacks.

The Feed Our Future Program is aimed at providing nutritious meals to at-risk children and youth participating in non-profit youth programs.

See "Kitchen," page eight

How HAND helps to prevent homelessness

By Marilyn Patterson, Program Manager HAND

Overview of HAND programs

The City of Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department works to promote safe and affordable housing for members of our community. HAND does this by providing many different types of support for those who are homeless or are at risk of becoming homeless.

The type of support HAND provides includes:

- Free, confidential counseling services to area residents as a part of our Comprehensive Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Housing Counseling Program, which is funded through a grant from HUD.

- Funding to the Bloomington Housing

Authority for a Tenant Based Rental Program.

- Management and promotion of Bloomington's annual Homeward Bound Walk.

- Administration of the Jack Hopkins Social Service Fund (JHSSF) and the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Social Service Fund. Most of these funds are allocated to Bloomington social service agencies that provide assistance to the homeless or those at-risk of becoming homeless. Some of these agencies are Monroe County United Ministries, Community Kitchen and Hoosier Hills Food Bank.

HAND Housing Counseling Program

As part of the HAND Housing Counseling Program, we provide one-on-one coun-

seling for guests at the Shalom Center on topics concerning housing and referrals to area agencies. Bloomington has many assets and resources that enable the counselor to help individuals create solutions to their unique problems.

Although HAND does not provide individual case management, we are able to advocate with agencies on behalf of the guests at the Shalom Center to help them bring about positive changes. The City's goal is to help persons experiencing homelessness develop a connection to the community, and to develop a better sense of responsibility about themselves and a better understanding of what services are available to them.

In partnership with agencies such as Martha's House, the Bloomington Hous-

ing Authority and Habitat for Humanity, HAND offers classes that encourage self-sufficiency. Topics include predatory lending, budgeting, credit and rental issues.

Additionally, HAND provides default and delinquent mortgage counseling to help families in danger of losing their home. For many, the loss of a job, death of a spouse or a child, or medical emergency can trigger homelessness. These are tragedies that have caused homelessness for many people. Our staff works with homeowners who have experienced a change in their finances and help them work out a solution that allows them to stay in their home.

See "Hand," page eight

HAND

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HAND also helps homeowners in jeopardy of losing their homes in Bloomington and surrounding counties by offering free-of-charge default counseling. Referrals to the HAND default counselors come from area lenders and realtors as well as from HUD and the Indiana Foreclosure Prevention Network (IFPN), a public-private partnership of community-based organizations, government agencies, lenders, realtors and trade associations that provide access to default counselors through a state-wide telephone helpline.

Tenant Based Rental Assistance Program

HAND also funds the Tenant Based Rental Assistance (TBRA) Program.

HAND also helps homeowners in jeopardy of

TBRA funds are used to assist households that do not have the funds to rent in Bloomington. Funds from this program are provided to the Housing Authority to subsidize rents for people who are waiting for a Section 8 voucher or other permanent housing solution. For example, TBRA funds can help seniors who have been released from a medical facility but have lost their housing as a result of their illness. This program provides them with temporary, interim rental assistance until they can identify a permanent housing solution.

Homeward Bound Walk

HAND also supports homelessness prevention by helping to carry out Bloomington's annual Homeward Bound Walk. Homeward Bound is a statewide fundraising walk to support agencies that provide

services to the homeless and near homeless. For the last five years, a HAND staff member has been the co-chairperson of the event and HAND has provided technical and organizational support to the walk, eliminating overhead cost for administrative services.

Bloomington's Homeward Bound Walk is a local collaboration among the City of Bloomington, Indiana University, United Way and 13 local social services agencies. The goals of the walk are for it to be profitable for the participating agencies and educational for the Bloomington community. What makes this walk truly unique is that 100% of the funds raised go directly to the 13 agencies. Since 2003, the event has raised more than \$260,000.

CDBG and JHSSF funds

Finally, HAND administers the social

services funds granted by the City through CDBG and the JHSSF to agencies that serve the needs of the community. These funds, allocated by the Bloomington City Council, provide support to social service agencies, many of which serve the homeless.

In 2007, the City allocated \$145,000 in Jack Hopkins Social Service Funds to 14 agencies. Of that, approximately \$80,000 went to programs or agencies that provide services to the homeless or those at-risk of homelessness. The City of Bloomington HAND Department awards the maximum amount allowed under HUD regulations to social service agencies. Of the \$139,000 of CDBG funds awarded to social service agencies in 2008, 52% was granted to emergency services.

Kitchen

Continued from page seven

The programs we serve include: the Boy's and Girl's Club, Girls Inc., the Monroe County Community Corrections JAMS, Rhino's Youth Center, Broadview Teen Learning Center and the Middle Way House "On The Rise" youth program. The Feed Our Future program served 35,506 meals in 2007, an increase of 33%.

Lastly, each summer the Kitchen delivers breakfasts to low-income children to provide an extra source of nutrition when school breakfast and lunch programs are unavailable. Breakfasts are delivered to children in two youth serving programs and six low-income neighborhoods. This service is critical considering that 29.6% of children enrolled in MCCSC (over 3,300 students) qualified for federal school meal programs in 2005-2006.

Schools in the areas closest to CK facilities had 50% or higher numbers of students eligible for these meals and at one school nearly 85% were eligible. In 2007, 12,766 meals were served, and increase of 48% from 2006.

Volunteering at CK

Volunteers are a crucial ingredient to the success of Community Kitchen. We use approximately 12 volunteers a day (17 a day in the summer) to help with meal preparation and meal service. If you are interested in a volunteer experience that is hands-on and on the front lines, we have a job for you! Our year-round volunteer shifts are Monday through Saturday, 11:30 am to 1:30 pm and 3:30 pm to 6:30 pm. You can sign up to volunteer by calling Annie at (812)332-0999 or by submitting an online application from our website: <http://www.monroecommunitykitchen.com/volunteers.php>

I've been very grateful for the many kindnesses shown me and my friend during my times in Bloomington. We have stayed here permanently and the CK services have assisted us greatly in the transition from vagabonding to homebound. Thank you.

-Community Kitchen patron

[com/volunteers.php](http://www.monroecommunitykitchen.com/volunteers.php)

Supporting the Kitchen

Each day the Kitchen receives donated food, supplies, equipment and services from individuals, groups, businesses, and congregations in the Bloomington community. A small donation can truly have a huge impact in the lives of those we serve. In 2007, each meal at CK cost an average of \$1.88, the lowest in a decade. A \$100 donation can provide 53 meals at the Kitchen and \$500 can supply all of the backpack contents for the Backpack Buddies Program for one month. If you are able and willing to make an ongoing commitment to fight hunger in our community, please consider our automatic withdrawal

program (ACH).

Throughout the months of March and April, all donations made to the Kitchen will be reported to the Feinstein Foundation which has divided \$1 million dollars a year for the past decade to hunger fighting agencies. CK will receive a portion of Feinstein's one million, based on the percentage of funds and food raised here compared to the country's total.

Hours of Operation

Dine in and carryout meals are available from our two locations on 917 South Rogers and 1100 West 11th street from 4:00 to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

Cupboard

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Our food pantry is unique as it operates with a client choice model; our clients receive a bag for each person in their household, filling those bags with items they choose from our pantry shelves. This model empowers clients during challenging times in their lives, and it reduces waste as nearly every item clients select are used by them. MHC food pantry has a simple sign in process, is run on the honor system, and has no cut-off for services.

MHC and Hoosier Hills Food Bank

MHC relies on the hard work of Hoosier Hills Food Bank (HHFB). HHFB staff and programs collect, store and make available 2.4 million pounds of food a year to agencies administering emergency food assistance programs in our six county region. MHC is one of over 80 agencies

receiving food from Hoosier Hills Food Bank, agencies who in turn redistribute food to those in need. MHC purchases 98% of all our food from HHFB for a small shared maintenance charge. We select food from HHFB five days a week. In 2007 MHC redistributed 32% of all HHFB's food, making MHC HHFB's largest agency partner.

Community Gardening Program

At MHC we do more than provide people with food. Our Community Gardening Program goes straight to the source of our interest in food—growing nutritionally robust produce ourselves. In this program, we teach patrons, volunteers and community members the skill of organic gardening, while raising fresh produce for the pantry. MHC is a partner in the local Plant-a-Row for the Hungry campaign, which encourages local gardeners to grow and donate fresh produce to alleviate

hunger. Last year this program collected and redistributed over 20,000 pounds of local produce. Want to grow food? Get your hands in the soil and volunteer in MHC's gardens!

Nutrition Education Program

Through our Nutrition Education Program, we offer information about the benefits of proper nutrition and how to use the food available in our pantry. We provide recipes, food samples, handouts on nutritional issues, and even workshops on special topics like canning, bread baking, seasonal cooking, and fermenting. We partner with local health professionals to lead classes and pass on knowledge about healthy eating habits.

Volunteering with MHC

MHC relies on over 85 active volunteers, 80% of whom are also food pantry patrons. Volunteers assist in the food

pantry Monday-Friday 3-6pm and in our gardens. To learn more about us or how you can get involved, please email us at mhc@mhcfoodpantry.org, call us: 812-355-6843, or check out our website www.mhcfoodpantry.org.

Supporting MHC

Your support goes a long way with MHC. A \$100 donation helps MHC acquire 715 pounds of food, food that has a retail value of \$1,500! You can mail in your support, come in and drop it off while we are open, sign up for our automatic monthly contributions, have your company match your gift, or sponsor one of our events!

Hours of Operation

Do you or someone you know need food assistance? Come visit us at MHC Monday – Friday 4pm-6pm. We are located at the address listed at the beginning of this article.

SCHN: A clearinghouse for housing information

By Jill Stowers, South Central Housing Network President

Mission of the South Central Housing Network

The South Central Indiana Housing Network is a group of dedicated providers and concerned community members who meet monthly to address the housing needs in our community. The mission of the Network is to provide and coordinate the best possible housing resources and supportive services to those who are most in need. This is accomplished in many ways. We ensure a continuum of care for individuals and families who are currently homeless or living in inadequate housing, or who might be in these situations in the foreseeable future. We work for the improvement

or elimination of substandard housing in Monroe County. We assess and prioritize housing needs and serve as a resource of information about housing and homelessness. Most importantly, we address the environmental, economic, and personal barriers to residential stability.

HUD's Continuum of Care provides funding for housing assistance and case management

A main focus of the Housing Network is to complete the annual grant request for HUD's Continuum of Care. This funding provides several local agencies the ability to provide long term housing assistance and

case management to homeless members of our community. The Network also works to disseminate information on other funding sources related to housing that could be of benefit to member agencies and the community.

Public educational meetings

We also seek to continually educate ourselves on the issues related to housing and homelessness. We regularly bring speakers in to our meetings to provide information and updates to attending members. In the past year, we have hosted the Indiana Housing and Community Development Authority, Corporation for Supportive Housing,

and the Family Shelter Task Group, among others. We also regularly seek area agencies to come to our meetings to inform us of their services so as to better enhance a continuum of services for clients.

The Housing Network meets the second Thursday of each month at the McCloskey Room in Showers. A person does not need to be a service provider to attend, and diversity in the Network is something we strive for. Meetings take place from 12:00-1:30. If you have any questions about the Housing Network, or would like to get involved, please contact Jill Stowers at 812.353.3250.

VITAL program offers adults another chance

By Sue Murphy, VITAL Coordinator, and Margaret Harter, Community Relations Coordinator, Monroe County Public Library

(812) 349-1373

www.mcpl.info/vital

VITAL has been helping individuals improve their lives for 30 years. Trained volunteers offer free, confidential tutoring for adults who want to improve their reading, writing, math, or English speaking skills. Pastor and IU football star Anthony Thompson had this to say about the program:

"We are dependent on the written word to function well in today's world. I am glad that I encouraged my friend Willie to ask for help from VITAL, and I am glad that the program was here for him. VITAL helps our community as a whole, by helping one individual at a time."

VITAL Learners

VITAL serves about 80 individuals every week. "Learners include community members from ages 18 to 83," says VITAL Coordinator Sue Murphy. "Their formal schooling varies from very little to graduation from high school."

Each learner is paired with a volunteer tutor. They meet together about two hours a week. VITAL also offers small-group ESL (English as a Second Language) for practice of conversational English.

Whatever the individual cause of low literacy, the result common to all adult learners is frustration and embarrassment. "Low self image is the first target a tutor is challenged to address," says Sue Murphy. "It affects general life skills, work potential and even family relationships."



VITAL tutors, like these pictured above, require training and have to meet various qualifications to be accepted into the program.

Through VITAL, learners gain confidence and ease in approaching the myriad daily tasks that require literacy proficiency, from understanding job applications and food labels to navigating healthcare and helping kids with homework.

Learners have:

- Passed the written driver's test
- Earned the GED (General Educational Development) diploma
- Gained employment, retained jobs and earned promotions
- Pursued post-secondary education

And there is often an added reward. "My reading has improved, which has made my life easier, and I have made a new friend along the way," shares Annie, a VITAL learner.

VITAL Tutors

More VITAL tutors are always needed. Tutors include college students, retirees, homemakers, and business people. Each one commits to a minimum of six months of service, and attendance at an "Introduction to Tutoring" workshop and periodic trainings. VITAL provides opportunities for tutors to share and learn from each other at "Tutor Talks" and other gatherings.

Explaining his motivation to volunteer, IU student Ethan Bradley says simply, "It is hard for me to imagine my life without being able to read whatever I need to for my classes, and for fun."

Most tutors remain involved in the program for three to five years; some have stayed for as long as 10 years. One reason for VITAL's success is the rewarding volunteer experience it offers. Veteran tutor John Lawson added this:

"There is a lot to be gained by sharing the gift of literacy. I have enjoyed working with a variety of individuals over the years and I can honestly say that I have learned something new every day I have tutored."

The VITAL Collection

All are welcome to use the VITAL collection of over 6,600 items. Many materials are suitable for self-directed study. Computers in the VITAL resource room are loaded with literacy and pre-GED software.

Community Support

All VITAL services are free. The program is supported by Monroe County Public Library, with additional donations from the Friends of the Library, individuals, local businesses, and philanthropic organizations. Not all VITAL volunteers are tutors. Many help with office work, promotion, and fundraising.

Each spring VITAL holds an annual fundraiser: The VITAL Quiz Bowl and Silent Auction. This year (April 21-24) marks the 25th anniversary of the Quiz Bowl. Local organizations form teams for a lively competition to which the public is invited. The Quiz Bowl also is presented live on The Library Channel, CATS cable channel 3.

Making a Difference for 30 Years

Dr. Anabel Newman, a VITAL consultant since the program's start, says that "there have been many changes over the years... but what has not changed is the positive impact that one caring individual can make on the life of another."

Centro Latino Comunal has office space in VITAL.

Upcoming Luna Festival celebrates women

By Loni Dishong, Women Inspire, Dorothy Granger, Girls Inc., Mary Embry, Fair Trade Bloomington, and Susan Lyons, Middle Way House

During the month of March 2008, four Bloomington non-profit organizations, Fair Trade Bloomington, Girls Incorporated of Monroe County, Middle Way House, and Women Inspire, will work in collaboration to celebrate Women's History Month by hosting two events that recognize the contributions of women. The funds generated through these events will help support the four programs in their work to address the needs of women and children locally and globally.

The first event is the First Annual Luna Music Festival on Saturday, March 22nd, at the Buskirk-Chumley Theatre. This celebration will bring together the talents of Jenn Cristy, Brenda Williams and the Soul Providers, and Jennie DeVoe and will include interludes that feature women and girls from the community. Tickets are \$25 and available at the Sunrise Box Office by calling 812-323-3020 or by visiting www.buskirkchumley.org. The show starts at 7pm and the doors open at 6pm for general seating and hors d'oeuvres provided by Middle Way Food Works.

The second event is the Fourth Annual Women's Arts and Crafts Fair and Expo on Saturday March 29th at Showers Plaza. This celebration will build on the momentum gained from Middle Way's annual craft fair, an event that has showcased the work of women artisans together with interactive activities for children, food booths, and arts and crafts demonstrations



including weaving, knitting, lace making. As well as artisans, this year expands the event to allow many area business women to showcase their products and services. The fair will be filled with the contributions of local performers, including Monika Herzig, Kaia, Hip Hop ConnXion, The Caravanserai Dancers, Dark Side Tribal, and The Sweetgrass Bluegrass Band. This celebration will highlight the depth and diversity of artistic expression in our community and empower artists by providing them with a popular venue to facilitate their artistic work. We hope to see you at this free event, which takes place at Showers Plaza from 11am – 4pm.

Women's History Month was selected by these four organizations as the ideal forum in which to build community awareness of the issues they address and to celebrate the many contributions of women. Collaboration on these celebrations informs the community not only of the work these organizations do but of their commitment to work together. Each of the organizations feels the particular needs of women daily. They united to create the Luna Festival as a result of their desire to celebrate Women's History

Month more loudly, more visually, and with inclusiveness.

It's easy to see the natural alliance that brought these four organizations together. Middle Way House has been an effective and treasured resource in the community since 1981. Working to achieve both individual and social change, Middle Way employs strategies to empower and support women as they move toward self-reliance. Simply put, Middle Way provides a community safety net that gives women options.

Girls Inc. directly confronts cycles of poverty, abuse, and chemical dependence by inspiring all girls to be strong, smart, and bold. For over 30 years, Girls Inc. has been successful at providing a place where girls develop healthy self-esteem and self-confidence, serving over 600 girls per year. These empowered girls become empowered women, like those one finds in Women Inspire.

Women Inspire was founded in 2005 to connect and empower women through education, mentoring, collaboration, community outreach, and a spirit of respect and friendship. Members and guest speakers present their interests and talents at

monthly gatherings that are free and open to the public. Attracting a diverse group, Women Inspire encourages a dynamic and compassionate environment in which participants help each other to achieve their personal and professional best.

Finally, Fair Trade Bloomington reaches women and children around the globe through promoting and sustaining an increase of fairly traded products in and around Bloomington. Fair trade embraces the work of women as a key component of poverty relief globally.

While the four organizations each have a different focus, we clearly share a common mission of empowering women and girls. Our combined vision is a more equitable society, and as such, we feel it is important for our organizations to unite for these celebrations. Our intention is that both the Luna Music Festival and the Women's Arts and Crafts Fair and Expo will become annual celebrations of women's contributions and services during March, Women's History Month.

We look forward to hosting these two engaging arts celebrations that will add to the events that make Bloomington such a unique community and we invite you and your family to join us!

For more information visit the Women Inspire website at www.WomenInspire.org.

Student group works with Positive Link to fight AIDS

By Ed Chamberlain, SGAC Co-Director

For this month's issue of Safety Net, the Student Global AIDS Campaign at Indiana University wishes to thank Bloomington Hospital Positive Link for all of its helpful encouragement, leadership and support. In retrospect, our student group at IU (SGAC) has grown extensively because of the hospital's support, and our partnership with them enables us to improve the community in numerous ways. To thank them, our group wants to briefly reflect on how this working relationship has produced some marvelous results in the community. For starters, I would like to explain how our student organization has come to share this mutually beneficial relationship with the hospital. In historical terms, our organization is one of the 85 chapters of

SGAC in the U.S. that aims to improve the living conditions of people living with HIV and AIDS in both local and global contexts. The IU SGAC chapter is a non-profit student group that consists of more than 15 active student members, and it is led by two student co-directors – Anna Kostrzewsky and Ed Chamberlain. By and large, IU's SGAC seeks to open conversations about the AIDS pandemic and the ways that everyone is affected by the virus. IU SGAC finds that open discussion is a great way to combat some of the struggles caused by HIV; in other words, through discussion and activism, we combat misinformation, silence and stigma.

Positive Link has greatly helped IU

SGAC to work on these problems on numerous occasions. For instance, our student organization has worked with Positive Link through the Bloomington AIDS Walk each year for the past four years. By organizing the walk, our group has fostered awareness and made monetary donations to Bloomington Hospital Positive Link. Last year, our organization donated \$1,200 to Positive Link in order to help their HIV+ clients with medical care, housing and other expensive health-related costs. For this year, we seek to double that number so that we can help even more. This spring, the AIDS Walk will take place on Saturday, April 19th at 1pm in the Third Street Park behind the Bloomington Police Station. As in prior

years, we will provide free snacks and coffee, sell t-shirts, provide information tables, walk around Bloomington, listen to performers and welcome community testimonies. Each year, this community project is a success because of the kindness and support of Bloomington Hospital Positive Link and many more groups. More than ever before, we are so delighted to be partners with them because we believe that through collaboration, we can improve the troubling conditions of the epidemic. On a final note, we invite all of Safety Net's readers to join us in this year's activities at the AIDS Walk. As we have found, every person can make a difference. For further information about the walk, please e-mail us at our account: sgac@indiana.edu.

The Shalom Center: A community treasure

By Patricia Andrews, Shalom Board President

In September of 2007, the Shalom Community Center celebrated its 5th anniversary as an independent 501 (3) (c) non-profit charitable organization. Most Bloomington citizens have heard of the Shalom Center and regard it highly. Yet, many only vaguely understand the scope and significance of Shalom's mission and outreach. The Shalom Community Center offers a safe, welcoming environment where residents of South Central Indiana who are experiencing poverty or homelessness can receive shelter, support services, food, and other necessities of daily living.

How many people are assisted by the Shalom Center in a given year? Based on grant-related data collected last year, we know that Shalom served 1,413 different individuals. The Center serves all categories of those experiencing homelessness and poverty: adult women and men, youth, the mentally and physically disabled, our nation's veterans, and an increasing number of elderly citizens, as well as families living in poverty (many of whom are the working poor) and single-parent families (many of whom are headed by women).

Shalom provides the only day shelter in Bloomington. Housed in the First United Methodist Church, the shelter does far more than protect Shalom guests from the elements. It is also a welcoming place where everyone is treated with respect and dignity, and many discover a sense of community and fellowship, receive much-needed assistance, and experience hope for the first time in a very long time. In the day shelter, guests can do their

laundry, make phone calls, and volunteer in all kinds of roles--staffing the hospitality desk, preparing and serving the meals, maintaining a clean and orderly dining area, and decorating for the holidays.

The day shelter is also the site of Shalom's hunger relief program. Shalom is the only agency in Bloomington to offer both breakfast and lunch each weekday, serving more than 200 women, men, and children every day. Hunger relief director, Ron Kerner, prepares and serves excellent, nutritious meals, assisted by guest and community volunteers. Individuals are served in a large dining hall, with a smaller dining area for families with children. Hunger in America, a 2006 comprehensive study of hunger in the United States recently noted that "Food is a basic human right. No one should have to go to bed hungry or have to choose between buying groceries and paying rent." Yet, hunger is on the rise in Indiana and in Bloomington as well. An August 30, 2007 editorial published in the Herald-Times noted, "If hunger is one measure of a community's health, then Bloomington has cause for concern." By the end of 2007, the Shalom Center will have served over 70,000 meals, an increase of nearly 50% over 2005. Shalom also

provides groceries and other resources to an average of 500 individuals each month through the Family Market outreach program at Templeton Elementary School, the local school with the highest percentage of students living in poverty.

The Shalom resource center and family program is located in the lower-level of the First Christian Church. Here guests receive mail, store their belongings, take hot showers, meet with caseworkers, and connect with visiting agency representatives.

Special rooms in this facility are devoted to families, with a play area for children, a computer to assist with job searches, and counseling services. The Shalom Center's Family Homelessness Prevention Project prevented 237 families from becoming homeless during the past year.

Shalom also serves as a front door to the larger community and institutions that can help bring stability and the hope of empowerment and self-sufficiency to those in need. Agencies from all over the area visit Shalom every week—meeting with Shalom guests and assisting them

with housing, education, and health-related problems. Visiting agencies include the City of Bloomington's Housing and Neighborhood Development Department, Ivy Tech, Volunteers in Medicine, and the Social Security Administration. Shalom also has its own employment program, Job Links, which brings employment

How many people are assisted by the Shalom Center in a given year? Based on grant-related data collected last year, we know that Shalom served 1,413 different individuals in 2006. The Center serves all categories of those experiencing homelessness and poverty...

counselors to the Center every day. These counselors help guests identify employment opportunities, assist with resume preparation, and offer coaching on interviewing and achieving job stability.

About one-third of guests who come to the Shalom Center are employed—but not in jobs that pay enough to allow them to provide for life's necessities—housing, child care, transportation, and food. So, the Shalom Center offers all it can—bus passes for those with new jobs or who need transportation to medical appointments, emergency assistance for families in the form of gas vouchers or utility assistance, diapers and infant formula, personal hygiene packets, and, of course, hot meals.

See "Shalom," page 12

"So this is Christmas": Shalom provides holiday meal

By Deb Allmayer and Audrey Heller, members of congregation, Beth Shalom



Volunteers of all ages helped serve food at the Shalom Center's Christmas Brunch.

The word homeless immediately brings to mind someone without a place to live. During the holidays, the importance of having a home as opposed to just a roof over one's head becomes even more significant.

Congregation Beth Shalom has sponsored a Christmas brunch for four years to guest visitors to the Shalom Community Center. Beginning preparation at 7 a.m. with the encouraging guidance of Shalom Community Center staff, volunteers contribute dishes ranging from muffins to turkey, vegetable casseroles to dessert, and cook eggs and other dishes on site. More importantly, they extend holiday wishes to Shalom guests as they serve them food, distribute gifts and sit down to share conversation.

Christmas 2007 saw more than 50 members from congregation Beth Shalom

and extended family work at the Shalom Center cafeteria, located at the First United Methodist Church (4th street and Washington) from 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. The cold day was warmed by the sun shining through the church windows as the participants not only ate and talked but also clapped and sang along with the incredible Sylvia McNair accompanied by Lou and Lenny Newman on piano and accordion. The Shalom Center fulfills so many needs on a daily basis. The Christmas brunch is just one more effort to provide a home for those who otherwise do not have one. As Shalom Center executive director Joel Rekas expressed, "It means so much for our guests, many of whom are homeless, and most of whom have no family nearby with whom to be during this important holiday."

Amethyst House: addiction treatment programs

By Tom Cox, Executive Director, Amethyst House

(812) 336-3570

www.amethysthouse.org

Amethyst House has been offering residential programs for persons with addiction problems for over 25 years in Bloomington. However, many people do not seem to know that we have also been offering outpatient addiction treatment programs (including gambling) for the last 5 years. For additional information on Amethyst House programs call us or check out our website at www.amethysthouse.org

Outpatient program

The outpatient program is offered at the offices on 7th and Walnut. Outpatient services include assessments, individual group and family counseling, IOP's currently one for women and one for men and case management. Amethyst House can also treat adolescents in the outpatient services. Outpatient services can begin while a person is on the wait list for a bed in either the men or women's programs and are on a sliding fee scale to assure that services are not denied based on the inability to pay. Person's seeking services that still feel the sliding scale exceeds their ability to pay may apply for additional reductions based on documented income and expenses.

Residential programs

Currently Amethyst House operates three residential programs in Bloomington. The Men's house can house 19 men, the Women's house can house a total of 12 women and dependent children and a 3/4 way house for men that can house 5 men that have completed the Men's house program but need additional support and structure. Due to partial funding from the federal Housing and Urban Development program Women must meet homelessness criteria for admission to the Women's house program.

Amethyst House accreditation and certification The Amethyst House housing, and outpatient services are internationally accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation facilities (CARF) and certified by the State of Indiana. Amethyst House received a three year accreditation this past June.

Amethyst House is also a Certified Managed Care program for the Hoosier Assurance Plan. (HAP) is the funding system of the State Department of Mental Health and Addictions that assists lower income Hoosiers' receive addiction treatment services.

Amethyst House also involved with advocacy for persons with addictions and their families

In addition to the treatment services Amethyst House is highly involved with advo-

Shalom
Continued from page 11

Many Shalom guests are experiencing homelessness—some sleeping temporarily on the floors of friend's homes, and others sleeping in cars, in alleys, or in the woods. Every person's story is unique. Some have chronic medical or mental health conditions. Others struggle with addictions. Some have lost their homes because of a sudden illness that leads to job loss. Some are escaping an abusive family situation. Some are veterans. Some are elderly. Some are very young. What do they have in common? They lack the basic support system of family and friends that the rest of us depend on to see us through difficult times. For many of those experiencing homelessness, the Shalom Center offers the only stable support system they have known in years. Shalom provides a safe space where those with no place else to

go can find a little bit of something that feels like home. Shalom executive director, Joel Rekas, put it best in a December 2, 2007 Herald-Times editorial: "Folks experiencing homelessness need time to heal—physically, emotionally, and even spiritually—before taking any steps forward, to recover from the loss of self-esteem and confidence that comes with it."

The Shalom Community Center is indeed a precious community resource. If you are interested in learning more about the Shalom Center, becoming a volunteer, or donating such items as food, sleeping bags, or infant formula, please contact Joel Rekas (joel@shalomcommunitycenter.org), or 334-5734. You can also support Shalom by making a donation to and/or attending a festive event, Dancing with the Celebrities, at 8:00 PM on May 24 in the Buskirk-Chumley theatre, where opera star Sylvia McNair will represent Shalom.

cacy for persons with addictions and their families. Tom Cox Exec. Director of Amethyst House is the Past Board Chair of the Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition (IAIC). IAIC is a broad range state-wide group that works toward addictions advocacy in the areas of 1) Stigma/discrimination, 2) Insurance Parity for addictions, 3) criminal justice deferral programs, and 4) increasing access to addiction services.

IAIC needs members to join and enhance the advocacy for addiction services throughout the State. Memberships are available for individuals as low as \$10.00. Scholarships are available to allow newly recovering persons to join the first year for free. To find out more information about IAIC call 1-800-555-6424 ext.231. IAIC advocacy workshop is coming to Bloomington April 19th 2008.

You can make a donation

As is the case with all residential treatment providers and for that matter all addiction treatment providers in the state, rising demand and continually less State, Federal, and Local funding threaten to reduce services available to lower income persons in need of addiction services. Donations of clothing, bed sheets, towels, blankets, food, and of course money are always needed. Many people do not realize that Amethyst House serves about 39,500 meals a year and provides over 13,000 nights of housing each year. The rent we charge to residents does not meet 1/2 of the cost of providing the services.

Upcoming Amethyst House events

April Alcohol Awareness Month: The Indiana Addiction Issues Coalition, Amethyst House, and CBH are teaming up to bring two workshops to Bloomington on April 19th. The events are free (including lunch) but registration is required to ensure seating. Donations to offset the cost of lunch are appreciated but not necessary. Contact Tom Cox at 812-336-7650 for more information or to register.

YMCA: Child obesity a growing concern

By Shelley Sallee, Youth, Family & Camp Director, Monroe County YMCA

Obesity and related chronic weight concerns, especially among children, has emerged as one of the most serious threats to our nation's health. Official health surveys find a rapid increase and the relevant statistics project this dangerous trend to continue without intervention and meaningful change in our children's daily eating habits and exercise routines. The National Center for Disease Control and Prevention finds that 16% of children and teens in the United States are currently overweight. Even in preschoolers, children ages 2-5, the prevalence of excessive weight has increased from 7% to more than 10%, or by more than 40% since 1994.

The adverse effects of obesity are now manifesting as early as childhood. Most overweight children are found to display at least one or more major risk factor for cardiovascular disease. Effects such as high cholesterol, high insulin or high blood pressure are readily testable, others may be less visible but still prevalent. Of course, overweight adolescents have a 70% chance

of becoming overweight adults, which increases their risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure and certain types of cancer.

What changes for our children will help reduce their risks for disease?

- Decrease calorie consumption with smaller portion size
- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Eat whole grains
- Decrease consumption of dietary fat
- Decrease consumption of "added sugars" found in soft drinks, fruit drinks, sports beverages and processed foods.
- Eat less fast food and eat together as a family.
- Get active!

According to the American Heart Association, children ages 2 and older should get at least 30 minutes of moderate-intensity physical activity every day with at least 30 minutes of vigorous physical activity 3-4 days a week.

Special Section: Youth Programs

America Reads: Walk a mile in my shoes

By Michelle Martin Colman, RSVP America Reads Coordinator



Diane Siddons' fifth grade class at St. Charles received a visit from America Reads' storytellers.



Like many other working Americans on January 15, 2008, Louis Robinson reported to work as the Business Unit Manager for Cummins, Inc., where he has held a number of positions over the past 16 years. Kim Morris Newson, Pre-college Coordinator, returned to her office at the IU Office of Community and School Partnerships to attend a meeting. Clarence Boone, Director of Diversity Programs for the IU Alumni Center, attended a business lunch.

That morning, however, one event in Bloomington, IN, bonded all three of them and deeply impacted 22 children of St. Charles School. In Diane Siddons 5th grade classroom, Louis, Kim, and Clarence told poignant stories about what it was like to grow up black in America. The program, Walk a Mile in My Shoes, was presented by RSVP America Reads. It wasn't the first time they have shared their stories with school age children, and it won't be the last.

Thanks to an MLK Grant from the City of Bloomington, Walk a Mile in My Shoes includes a 45 minute program featuring local African American storytellers. In spite of the obstacles of racial prejudice, economic hardship, segregation and job status, the storytellers tell of attaining their dreams.

The first Walk a Mile in My Shoes program (originally called American Legacy) was attended by more than 1000 students and teachers at Edgewood Primary and Intermediate Schools in January 2006. Carol Gardner, Edgewood Primary School Principal, reflects on the day: "...personal stories of five African-American volunteers touched the hearts of every student and adult in our audience. The students at Edgewood Primary and Edgewood Intermediate were left with an understanding

of what only these personal stories could tell. By revisiting the memories of these talented individuals, our students have a deeper understanding of their lives and legacy."

Since January 2006, 2000 children and adults in Monroe County have listened to presenters whose stories of childhood experiences have often brought tears to listener's eyes. Somber gazes have filled the rooms, reflecting silent disbelief.

Kim Morris Newson

In 1927, Kim's grandmother, Fair, a young woman 7 months pregnant, was left stranded on a levee in Greenville, Mississippi during a flood. Meanwhile, 35 white men, women, and children were rescued in government boats. The other 13,000 black people, mostly women and children, were left for days without food, clean water, or sanitation. They were forced to use their blankets for makeshift tents and warmth.

With tears streaming down her face, you could hear a pin drop in the room as Kim spoke: "Can you believe it? Can you imagine how cruel that was? Can you imagine the feeling of being left behind in a crisis because you looked different?" Kim's mother, Louise, was born only weeks later, but would die at the young age of 38, when Kim was only 10. Kim's grandmother believes Louise's early death was likely caused by the stress of those days on the levee.

Louise grew up and fell in love with a handsome white Italian Jewish man, whose family rejected them. As a child, Kim recalls sneaking in the back door of her grandmother's home in the all-white neighborhood of Waukegan, Illinois, where intermarriage in the 50's was accepted by few, if any. Kim shares: "Without understanding

why, I lived with the pain of segregation all of my childhood. I was judged too black to be accepted by white children, and too white to be accepted by black classmates. Why didn't I have friends? I couldn't understand. Why did skin color matter?" Despite a life of ongoing challenge, Kim went on to earn her Masters degree at 50 years of age and she is the mother of six accomplished children, one an engineer, two in college, one in the workforce, and two still in grade school. In addition to her professional responsibilities, Kim dances with the IU African American Dance Company with whom she has traveled the world. She dedicates many of her school performances to her mother, Louise. Kim tells the students: "My storytelling and dance is an expression of where I came from, who I am and how I want to contribute to make a world without borders. I believe that one-on-one dialogue is the key to create a new, unprecedented history in the advancement of world peace. This is the means by which people transform their own lives. There is nothing more powerful than dialogue. People's true feelings come to the surface through individual dialogue. The amazing power innate in each person's life can be tapped through one-on-one encouragement. True success means winning your battle with yourself. Those who persist in the pursuit of their dreams, no matter what the hurdles, are winners in life, for they have won over their weaknesses. My own experience taught me never to be mean to anyone who was different from me – be it color of skin, religion or background. And most of all...I never stop dreaming."

Louis Robinson II

Louis Robinson II grew up in Ferrell, Pennsylvania. At eight years old, during

a visit to his grandparents, Louis spent one day walking hand in hand with his grandfather on a street in Alabama. Louis painfully remembers: "A police officer pulled up alongside us on a motorcycle, and yelled rudely: 'Boy, you get back up on the sidewalk!' He was speaking to my grandfather! At that age, I knew nothing about the prejudice in Alabama. I was from Philadelphia where my father and uncle ran Christman's Garage and spoke four different languages. So I said proudly and respectfully, 'He's not a boy, he's my grandfather, Mr. Leroy Etheridge!' Arrest loomed over us as I watched my grandfather desperately and fearfully explain how I was from another state and didn't understand 'how things were' in Alabama."

Louis doesn't remember going back to Alabama very often after that, spending much of his spare time working in a number of his family's businesses, including the Christman Garage, whose dog-eared business card he still proudly carries in his wallet. He graduated from what is now Youngstown State University. His uncle invented and patented the duel action cylinder which became part of all brake systems in the U.S. Attributing to his success was a partnership he formed with a Jewish businessman.

The life of Louis is a testimony to family bonds that survive the years, working hard and taking pride in one's work, and the wealth of lifetime accomplishment that only comes from bridging color barriers and working together. Louis insists: "I don't want children who hear my story to ever have to go through what I went through. I want them to remember so they can help keep it from ever happening again."

See "America Reads," page 14

America Reads

Continued from page 13

Clarence Boone

Clarence Boone invites the children to guess what sport he played in college. The children giggle as they yell out a long list of possibilities. One young man finally hits the mark and shouts “shot put!” Clarence uses this short exercise to drive home the point of being careful not to make prejudgments about people. As a large black man, with several degrees from Indiana University, Clarence has often had to confront false assumptions, prejudgments and stereotypes while living in Southern Indiana. Most people would never guess, however, that his father was a well-respected physician, and his mother was a former educator. Clarence’s childhood instilled in him a profound respect for education. He holds up a battery and remembers his father telling him how “every battery contains the potential to ‘light up’ its environment, just like each one of us.” Clarence encourages the students: “You are full of potential! Don’t let anyone ever tell you that you aren’t.” He closed with a Marianne Williamson poem: “Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be?...as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same. As we are liberated from our own fear, our presence automatically liberates others.”

Glorianne Leck, Walk a Mile in My Shoes Facilitator

In 2008, Glorianne Leck, retired Educational Policy Studies Professor from the Youngstown State University, joined Walk a Mile in My Shoes. Glorianne adeptly advised on program design and curriculum development, as well as served as the classroom facilitator of stimulating discussion. Glorianne reflects on the program at St. Charles this January: “When I entered the classroom, I first noticed the minority students were doing their best to be invisible, i.e. quiet, not making eye contact, hunched over their desks. When we left, after four days of mini-sessions, I observed those same young people obviously now feeling safe and happily engaged. Those same students had their hands up, responding to questions, smiling, sitting up straight at their desks. They obviously now felt personally empowered by having their classmates learn the lessons about the risks and consequences of pre-judging.”

Do you want “Walk a Mile in My Shoes” in your classroom?

Michelle Martin Colman, founder of Walk a Mile in My Shoes, requests that readers not share the program process, outlined below, with students. She emphasized, “Our dream is for as many students as possible to have the ‘AH -HA!’ experience before they leave elementary school.”

The Walk a Mile in My Shoes program requires at least one week of preparation and approximately 6 hours of class time stretched over a few days. On Monday, teachers inform parents that their children will be participating in an interactive program. Students sign a commitment as well, to help ensure the program’s success. Students are then instructed to bring in slippers that best represent their identity. They are to keep their slippers hidden in a brown paper bag to maintain anonymity.

Friday

With students out of the room, the slippers are put on display in the classroom. Volunteer Glorianne Leck attaches questions to each slipper: “Is this person smart? Wealthy? Funny? Athletic? Can they read? Other comments?” Upon returning to class, the students visit each pair of slippers and anonymously respond to the questions.

Monday

The slippers are again displayed, this time with the judgments made about their owners. The students still do not know to whom the slippers belong. However, they do know what their classmates think about them, entirely based on their slippers.

Tuesday

American Legacy storytellers visit the classroom and share their stories.

Wednesday

The students identify and wear their own slippers today, along with sandwich boards around their necks that display the prejudgments made about them. Students stand and read the comments, discuss them, and are facilitated in a discussion about what prejudgments are being made, and what it means to be judged solely by one’s slippers. For the rest of the day, students wear the signs and their slippers.

Follow Up

Other materials are recommended for discussion for classrooms that can extend the project. A number of materials can also be found on the teaching tolerance website www.teachingtolerance.org.



The program gives participating children like Bailee Conklin (above) and Xavier Martinez a chance to reflect on their perceptions of others.



Teacher Diane Siddons celebrates the value of Walk a Mile in My Shoes: “This activity was inspirational and informative! By participating in the activities, students were able to explore myths and stereotypes about prejudging others. The experience demonstrates how people may be supporting racism unintentionally. The children haven’t stopped talking about this!”

Get involved!

Please volunteer to become a Walk a Mile in My Shoes storyteller and share your history of growing up as a minority in America! We also encourage anyone interested in diversity to volunteer in other capacities as class facilitator, curriculum developer, classroom aide, etc. Please contact Americorps*VISTA Nicole Swindler at 812-876-3383 or nswindler@area10agency.org. We would love your involvement.

If you would like to get your school, club, or class connected, please contact Michelle Martin Colman at 812-322-1500 or mmartin@area10agency.org. There are age appropriate materials for grades 1-4.

Kids, staffers and volunteers agree: B&GC is great!

Is an awesome Club! If you want your kids to come, just come right over to the Club. You can ask Rebecca to show you around. The cost to get this is only \$20, but if you have more than one kid, it will cost more. I think kids should come to the Club because they can make new friends or discover and learn and explore. A lot of people will show you around and be your friends, so come on down to the Club.

Brittany, age 12

My favorite place in Boys & Girls Club is the gym because we play civil war and 4 corners. The Club is so fun because you get to ride scooters, do gymnastics, play pool and air hockey, and you can do your homework. There is also an art room in the Boys & Girls Club. A lot of people go in the art room because we do a lot of crafts! There are a lot of good kids in Boys & Girls Club. I also like the staff. They are cool! The Club is cool and it is after school. In the summer we go to the pool.

Makenzie, age 10

The Club is cool. I go after school. I love the staff here. They all volunteer. We come to have fun and get together with everyone. We play hide and seek during the week.

Lexus, age 10

After we get out of school! I get to the Boys & Girls Club because it's so cool! It is so much fun. In the gym, I run, run, run! The staff are so much fun too. They let you do a lot of stuff too.

Shakur, age 11

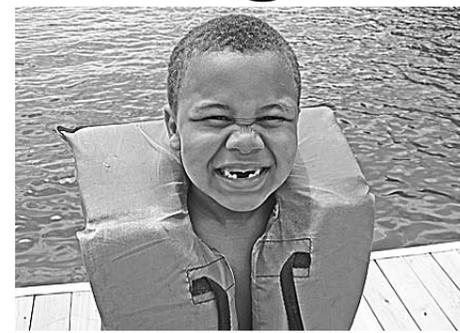
This Club rocks. My favorite thing is bumper pool. My favorite room would be the art room. All the staff and volunteers are so cool. Sometimes when it's warm we get to go outside. One time we had a fire drill and we were all wondering what it was. One time I hit the pool ball off the table and when we do that we are done. It was embarrassing. That's all I have to say about the Club.

Jordan, age 9

The best thing we do at Boys & Girls Club is play nonstop and talk to the greatest staff!

Celine, age 11

Thank you so much for this Club. It is so fun with tournaments. And pool and snack. I love this Club so much. And the activities. It is so cool. Thank you for our health and



Monroe County Boys and Girls Club kids ham it up for the camera. everything. I love this Club. I do.

Savannah, age 7

From a staff member

Working at the Club has its perks. Having fun everyday on the job is definitely a first. Snacks, basketball, air hockey, and pool. Fun, love, support, and encouragement are the tool. Life can be scary, confusing, and hard. I'm here to help them all get far.

Heather, age 21

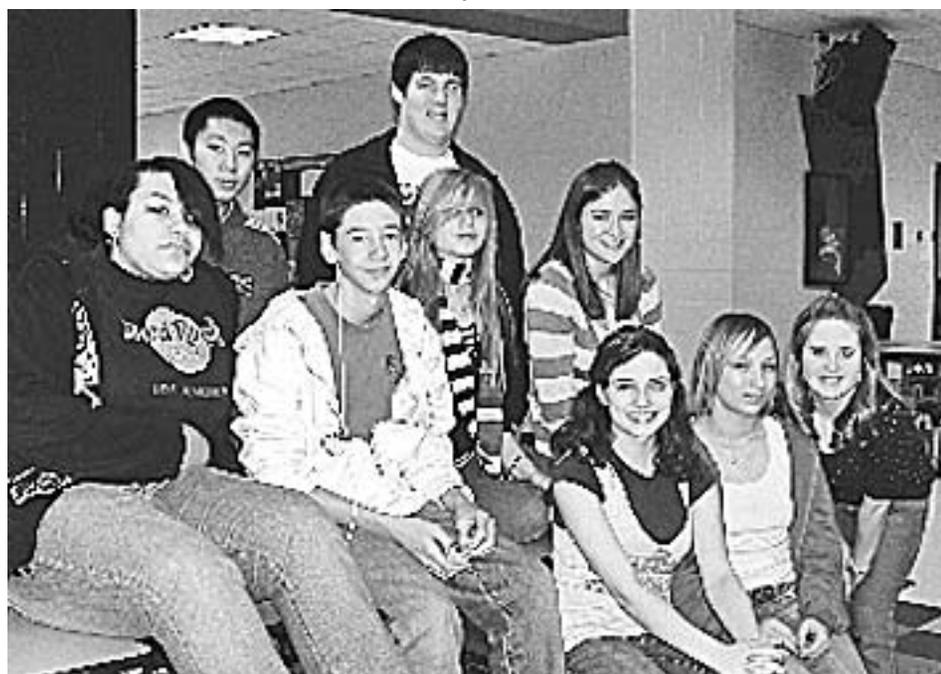
From a volunteer

My favorite thing about the Club is meeting new people. The best stories I have ever heard are about interesting people. Every day at the Club is the beginning of another story.

Justin, age 21

The Mentor Connection: Upperclassmen help freshmen

by Deborah Meader, Director of Site-Based Programs (with a lot of help from her friends)



Members of The Mentor Connection get specialized help and attention from students who can help them deal with the pressures of high school.

Do you remember the transition from middle to high school? Chances are you were excited about having more choices and freedom. You undoubtedly looked forward to meeting new people. But you were probably a bit nervous as well. It's possible you were worried about getting picked on or teased, getting lost in a large, unfamiliar school, or dealing with harder subjects and more work.

You were not alone. The transition to high school, with its messy mix of excitement and anxiety, is an experience everyone can relate to. How you respond to your first year of high school has a lot to do with how confident you are that you'll fit in and successfully navigate new academic demands.

The support of a cohort brought together for the purpose of easing the transition can make a fundamental difference in how freshmen will experience that challeng-

ing first year. When freshmen are given a chance to develop friendships with upperclassmen and other incoming freshmen, they are more likely to engage and succeed in the high school experience. This is the underlying principle of The Mentor Connection, a collaborative pilot project of Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana (BBBSCI) and Bloomington High School South (BHSS).

Participation in the Mentor Connection is 100% voluntary. Freshmen agree to be matched with an upperclassman (junior or senior) for the purpose of friendship and academic support during their transition to high school. The upperclassmen mentors are recruited, screened, and trained by BBBSCI and have committed to a minimum of one school year in the program. There is currently a group of six matches meeting on a weekly basis.

See "BBBS," page 16

Special Section: Criminal Justice Programs

MCCJCC offers open criminal justice discussion

By Joseph D. O'Connor, Monroe County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, chair

There are many agencies and programs involved in enforcement, adjudication, oversight and implementation in the Monroe County Criminal Justice System. Coordination among these groups has been overseen by the Monroe County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (MCCJCC) for the last several years.

Origin and purpose of the MCCJCC
As a result of recommendations made by a criminal justice task force at the time, the County Commissioners created the Monroe County Criminal Justice Coordinating Council (MCCJCC) in March,

2002. The purpose of the MCCJCC was "to create a forum for the regular discussion of issues affecting the criminal justice system, to facilitate the exchange of meaningful data to allow for the analysis of systemic problems and to promote meaningful communication for planning and resource allocation, and to coordinate programming and management of ongoing policy affecting all of Monroe County criminal justice entities."

Membership of MCCJCC

Membership on the MCCJCC consisted at that time of a County Commissioner,

a County Council Member, the Monroe County Sheriff, the Monroe County Prosecuting Attorney, the Monroe County Public Defender, an appointee of the Commissioners to represent other law enforcement agencies in Monroe County, the Judge from the Monroe County Unified Circuit Court responsible for juvenile matters, two other Judges chosen by the Board of Judges, two lay citizens appointed by the Commissioners, and two attorneys, one of whom was appointed by the Public Defender counsel, and one of whom was appointed by the Prosecutor but was not to be a member of the Prosecutor's staff. In addition, ex officio members invited to MCCJCC meetings to help with their expertise included the Jail Commander, the Chief Probation Officer, the Community Corrections Director, and a person appointed by the Mayor of the City of Bloomington.

The two members appointed by the Commissioners as citizen lay members, Joe O'Connor and Charlotte Zietlow, have been on the Commission since its inception. O'Connor has Chaired the Commission, and Zietlow has acted as Secretary, transcribing detailed minutes of the meetings. The MCCJCC now meets every other month.

The ordinance was revised slightly in 2007, to include two County Council Members, as well as a representative from Bloomington Hospital appointed by the Commissioners.

Forum for discussion

Since its inception, the MCCJCC has provided a forum for discussion and coordination among the various participants and stake holders in the Monroe County Criminal Justice System. For example, the Council provided input to the Board of Judges, who shortly after discussions held at the Council reorganized the court system so that all criminal matters would be focused in three courts, and those Judges coordinate among themselves and provide a much closer scrutiny of the jail facility, to make sure that the jail population was kept as low as reasonably possible. Statistics and information were presented to the Council to demonstrate that, contrary to popular myth, the jail population consisted of those who have committed serious crimes, and those who had committed crimes as a violation of probation, which caused their probation to be revoked and them to be required to serve their jail time. There were very few first time low level offenders incarcerated in the jail at any time. Jail population is routinely monitored and discussed at the Commission meetings.

Crisis Intervention Team

Early in the Commission's meetings, an incident occurred at the Monroe County Jail, which raised the public's awareness of the problems associated with the arrest and incarceration of persons with mental illness.

See "MCCJCC," page 17

Progress made in conviction discrimination

By Joseph HJ Grott, citizen volunteer

You may be aware that for over a year now, attempts have been made (unsuccessfully) to have a bill introduced in the Indiana state senate to limit how long a person's conviction may be held against him, or her, on employment applications and to allow for expungement of arrest records which did not result in a conviction. Some progress in this area has been finally made. Senator Earline Rogers (Third District) took up the challenge and submitted the proposed bill and GOT a NUMBER (Senate Bill 293)! Unfortunately, this being the short session, the bill did not receive a hearing in committee. But, that is not going to stop Sen. Rogers. She has agreed to resubmit the bill next

session and develop a study committee in the interim. If you have had difficulties obtaining a job because of a past conviction, or know of a friend or relative who has, your support is needed. Sen. Steele is the Chair of the committee that needs to pass on the bill. Write, or e-mail, him asking his support. Have your friends and family (no matter what part of the state they live in) contact him, and their local Sen. and Rep. Contact Sen. Rogers with any help you may be able to give. Contact our local senator telling her you want her to add her support. The conditions will never improve until we get something done to see that they do. Start now and don't let up.

BBBS

Continued from page 15

Mentor Connection matches meet during

BHSS's weekly Student Resource Time (SRT). SRT offers a smaller learning environment for one period every Wednesday. Students can choose to visit teachers for assistance, use labs, attend presentations on a number of subjects, or meet with fellow participants in the Mentor Connection.

Mentor Connection members have embraced the idea of lending to support to each other – mentor and mentee alike. They began as strangers sharing a common experience – that oftentimes overwhelming first year of high school. For this group of high school students, being in the Mentor Connection has meant new friendships, shared lunches, homework help, and more. They are planning already for the 2008-09 school year. For example, this year's "mentees" will become "mentors in training" during their

sophomore year. They want to offer new freshmen the same support and friendship they received.

Recently we asked the students to talk about what the Mentor Connection has meant to them. They interviewed each other and offered us the following quotes:

"The reason I did this program is because it would give me a chance to meet new people, and to get help with homework."

Macy, Freshman

"My mentee is Macy and I enjoy getting together with her because she and I have good open discussions."

Rebecca, Junior

"I enjoyed helping others adjust to the high school environment and working with my mentee TJ."

Tony, Junior

"I liked getting to know a lot of new

people through Bigs and also getting help from my Big Tony."

TJ, Freshman

"I liked being able to get help on homework and just hanging out during SRT class. My mentor is Courtney and I enjoy hanging out with her."

Lindley, Freshman

"I like it a whole lot because I made new high class friends that helped me. Also great for students who are shy. It's also fun."

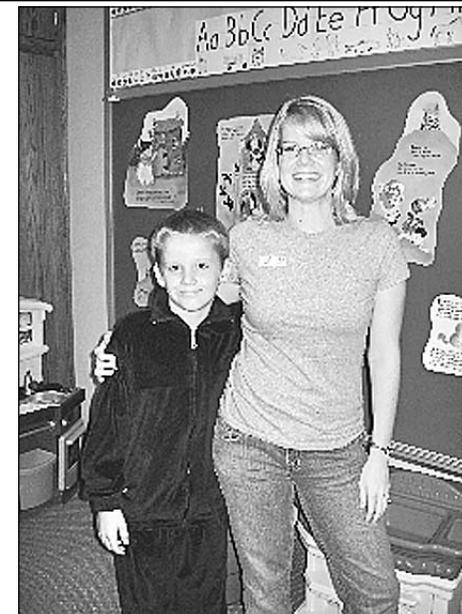
Jeremy, Freshman

"Big Brothers and Big Sisters is working out good for me. One reason I chose to be in here is because I thought it would be a good experience for me and it is."

Shalika, Freshman

"Being in Big Brothers & Big Sisters has helped build my leadership skills."

Anissa, Junior



Big Julie and Little Nathan are one of many Big-Little pairings in the Bloomington area.

New Leaf: Building a continuum of care for reentry

By Vid Beldavs, Executive Director, New Leaf – New Life, Inc.

Former inmate shares New Leaf story

By Antonio D. Jackson

I really can't justly define what New Leaf/New Life has caused me to discover about myself while being a participant in their program located here inside the Monroe County Correctional Center.

My first assessment of their idea of having a group of men who for the most part of their lives have done nothing but lie, steal, manipulate, hurt family, friends, and their community was "What have I gotten myself into?" I couldn't see any thing good coming from a group of me's who pretty much gave in to ourselves. We are our facilitators. No one's here to time our groups. No one's watching over us to check our work. Each of us are having to do what has been for us so long. Think! Being in the position to think has led me to really see and believe in myself. I haven't taken the place of God in my life. I've come to understand my part in my life.

My recovery is not a destination. It is a continual journey. It is also something I now do for me. In the past my motivation was to avoid legal consequences, or I'll attempt to stay clean for someone that I was hurting because of my lifestyle. But those reasons were short lived despite how noble they appeared. I've come to realize that I'm a good enough reason to stay clean. That despite the things I've done, they're not who I am. And, even though I allowed by addiction to become my feel good god. Being in this program, in this exact moment has helped me develop a thinking pattern that helps me feel good about myself. Drugs were not my problem. The way I perceived-processed things were. I used drugs to "feel good" and to avoid having to think anything through. I lived off of impulse. I wasn't grateful for the gift of life God has given me. So, to me if it felt right it had to be right. But having to begin how to think to slow down, take it easy. I can admit that my feelings aren't an accurate gauge of reality. And for many years my own feelings have deceived me.

See "Jackson," page 18

The need for reentry programming inside the jail and aftercare outside after release

Very little programming other than GED classes was provided in the jail prior to NewLeaf-NewLife to help prepare those in jail to make a successful transition to life and work in the community. In early 2006 jail commander Bill Wilson implemented objective classification which resulted in the concentration of more dangerous inmates in restricted cell blocks opening the others to programming by NewLeaf-NewLife volunteers.

Building a Continuum of Care for Reentry from Jail

Reentry starts when the offender is booked into the jail and ends when the person successfully reenters the life and work of the community. The purpose of the project launched in July 2006 by NewLeaf-NewLife with financial support from an Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) grant awarded to Monroe County is to build an effective Continuum of Care for reentry from jail particularly for those who suffer from substance abuse problems. All

programs within the project are voluntary. We believe that people who are forced to take a program are not likely to have the motivation required for success. The Continuum of Care starts with the Intake Program that assesses new inmates and prepares them for success in jail.

Our core program in the jail is the Therapeutic Milieu (TM) which draws from ideas for a democratic inmate community in the jail developed by the Center for Therapeutic Justice with additional program elements drawing on several other approaches to substance abuse treatment in a correctional setting such as motivational interviewing and enrichment programming provided by volunteers.

The Therapeutic Milieu and related aftercare programming are managed by professional counselors. Other programs are volunteer led. Volunteer-led programs are underway in cell blocks housing non-violent offenders that include writing programs, drama, life-skills, choral singing, yoga, and Bingo with several others in the development and planning stages. One such program is Thresholds.

See "New Leaf," page 18

Crossroads offers support for ex-inmates

By Joe Castle, Transition Coordinator for New Leaf-New Life Transition Program

Crossroads Support Group, sponsored by New Leaf-New Life (NLNL), is a fellowship of men and women recently released from jail or prison. The group functions as a therapeutic milieu to share common burdens, discover solutions to common problems, and alleviate the tremendous stress associated with transition, recovery, and becoming reestablished as a productive member of the community. The group was formed to provide outreach during the critical period following re-entry when many ex-offenders are most at-risk for relapsing into usual patterns of substance abuse and criminal behavior. Rehabilitation must be

maintained post-release to be effective. Generally lacking are reliable sources of positive influence among peers to encourage, not hinder, programming initiated while incarcerated. Crossroads exists wholly to occupy this particular niche as these men and women struggle to rebuild their lives.

As a Transition Coordinator for NLNL, my role is to function as a group facilitator and resource person. I witness first-hand how group members, up against seemingly insurmountable odds, find the will to persevere. Reporting from the front-lines, these are the "crossroads" of a typical person re-

entering the community...

Imagine, if you will, experiencing tremendous loss in your life as a consequence of your decisions and actions. You have abused alcohol and drugs, and you are an addict. You have lost your job, your vehicle, your home—and now your freedom. You are in jail and powerless to recoup any of your losses. You feel remorse. You feel shame. You feel helplessness. The emotional pain is overwhelming. You resolve to amend your life. You are working Step 4 of the 12 Steps of AA. With the help of a program in jail, you have developed a plan.

Suddenly, you are released. You need food, clothing, shelter—a toothbrush. You are on foot. You are cold. You do not have a nickel in your pocket. Everyone you have a close relationship with is using. The urge to use is overwhelming. Avoiding the bar district, you duck into a warm coffee shop downtown and contemplate the consequences. All you want is relief from the anxiety you feel. It is 3:00 p.m. and the next AA meeting is not until 6:00 p.m. You say a prayer, and with an agonizing act of the will, you humble yourself and make your way to a local shelter as planned.

This is your first time in a shelter. Your night begins sleepless and fitful. You reminisce about your life before alcohol destroyed your marriage and your career. You made it through the first day and you feel hope. Exhausted, you finally fall asleep, only to be awakened moments later by a disturbance in the shelter. You begin thinking about tomorrow. So much needs to be accomplished. You need a job. Your work history is checkered since the divorce, and now you are an ex-felon. Your child support is current. You went several thousand dollars more into arrears while you were incarcerated. You deliberate about taking the risk of driving without a license. What other choice do you have?

See "Crossroads," page 18

MCCJCC

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The MCCJCC was instrumental in promoting

the implementation of a crisis intervention team, modeled after such programs in Memphis, TN and Fort Wayne, IN, which has resulted in the training of most of the local law enforcement personnel, in coordination with Bloomington Hospital, regarding the proper handling of persons whose conduct brings them to the attention of the criminal authority, but whose conduct is based on mental illness. The police personnel have been trained to identify such persons and such behav-

ior, and to assist those persons in seeking treatment at mental health facilities through the Bloomington Hospital, rather than incarceration.

Programs being discussed

Currently the MCCJCC is vitally interested in the proposals regarding a criminal justice campus, the need for a juvenile justice facility that has been studied, debated, and discussed for many years in our community, and the monitoring of the processes and programs in place to reduce not only jail population, but more importantly, recidivism. The MCCJCC sees reports not only from the Judges, the Prosecutor,

the Public Defender, the Sheriff and the Jail Commander, and the elected Monroe County representatives, but also from the leaders of New Leaf-New Life, Inc. which continues to work with inmates to assist in their reintegration into society, to reduce the possibility they will be pulled back by forces they cannot deal with into the criminal justice system.

The members of the MCCJCC look forward to dealing with the issues confronting the criminal justice system, and to assisting the respective participants in the system to coordinate the work of those participants for the greater benefit of the citizens of Monroe County.

Crossroads

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The logistics of full-time employment during Day

Treatment seem impossible. But how will you pay your child support otherwise? The stress is overwhelming. The urge to use comes upon you in a wave. You hear the first wake-up call. You are jerked into reality. It is 6:00 a.m.

You now feel dog-tired and fatigued. The question enters your mind-- Is probation really easier than just doing my time? You contemplate this as you pull yourself from bed to wait your turn in the restroom. Your attitude becomes increasingly negative. You feel discouraged. You yearn for someone to talk to. You feel lonely. You wonder what Bob is up to today.

The hardships depicted in the preceding scenario are all too real. Portrayed is a man who demonstrates resolve by avoiding "triggers" effectively upon his release, but he is pushed to the breaking point by overwhelming stress. Substance abuse and other compulsive behaviors (including criminal behaviors) are coping mechanisms for managing stress, and are normally intertwined. Without intervening post-release support to help manage and alleviate the stress of re-entry, it is discernable how people can feel beaten even before they begin to fight. Hence, relapse occurs in spite of past rehabilitation, and

in spite of adverse health, social, and legal consequences. This is called recidivism. Undue stress becomes the precipitating factor.

Too many among us, however, share the position that these hardships are justified as further consequence for breaking the law. Propagating this attitude deadlocks legislation and funding for initiatives that provide vital programming for successful re-entry. Not providing supportive services perpetuates recidivism, jail overcrowding, and as a result, increased socio-economic burden on the community. As stated in the Indiana Constitution of the State Article 1, Section 18: "The penal code shall be based on the principles of reformation and not of vindictive justice." The writers of our constitution understood well the principles of social justice; that justice is achieved in every aspect of society, not merely the administration of law.

In the spirit of social justice, Crossroads is structured as a forum for discovering lawful solutions to unjust problems commonly encountered by ex-offenders on the road to recovery. The group follows three guiding principles: 1) Problems are challenges; every problem has a lawful solution; every obstacle can be overcome, 2) We have more power to solve problems united in humility, than alone in pride, and 3) We will share a common bond, not a common bonds-

man. The group also adheres to seven core values: 1) Humor, 2) Humility, 3) Integrity, 4) Compassion, 5) Cooperation, 6) Accountability, and 7) Respect. As group facilitator, I direct group process and maintain constructive social interaction by upholding these guiding principles and core values. At each meeting, each member, in turn, without interruption, is given the opportunity to present his or her most pressing or difficult "challenge" of the preceding week, as well as voice his or her feelings. The group then relates and collaborates on a solution. The group also empowers the member to act on the solution. The member is held accountable for acting on the solution before the next meeting. Members are given the option to "pass" by sharing a success story (i.e. the outcome of acting on a solution from the previous meeting). Like Alcoholics Anonymous, group members provide ongoing emotional and technical support to one another, and veteran members serve as examples and mentors to newcomers. Crossroads has a much broader scope, however, and functions to supplement, not replace, 12-step programs. Crossroads becomes a source of hope, healing, renewed purpose, and accountability for those who choose to participate.

In the course of an evening, hearts can change, attitudes can change, life choices can change, and opportunities can change.

In the course of a month, lives can change. At the last meeting, a newcomer was made aware of the Work Opportunity Tax Credit, giving him renewed hope in his work search. Another member was given a job lead and was encouraged to make a call. He secured an interview the next day. At a previous meeting, a newcomer was given the opportunity to vent his frustrations, without censure or interruption. He was poised to take his first drink that very night. The empathy was palpable. The boost in his self-esteem after the group response was obvious. These typical real life examples galvanize, for me, the position that initiatives like Crossroads help reduce the incidence of recidivism.

Crossroads Support Group meets once a week from 7:00p-8:30p at the Community Kitchen on South Rogers St. All ex-offenders are welcome. Crossroads is currently a closed group; however, plans are underway to organize an open session for families as well. If you are a community member who is interested in supporting Crossroads, we have a need for coffee and snacks, as well as early morning on-call volunteers to transport newly released ex-offenders to Labor Ready. Often, earning the first \$50.00 is the first task at hand. NLNL maintains an office at WorkOne. Call 812 331-6000 ext. 223 for more information.

New Leaf

Continued from page 17

Thresholds is a one on one program involving a

volunteer and an inmate in a seven week, six step program that also includes group work. One of the goals of Thresholds is to guide people to make thoughtful decisions.

We see the need for many tools and continual assessment of people progressing through various elements in the Continuum of Care. We do not see a magic bullet approach that will work equally well for all inmates. Some will require a residential treatment while others may benefit more from simply taking the Thresholds program. Our goal is a Continuum of Care starting from Intake in the jail and ending with successful reentry to the community. A key element for successful reentry is work with the family parallel to working with the inmate with other programming. In many cases an inmate makes strong progress but the family situation has deteriorated badly during his/her incarceration leading to further violations and incarceration. We

see it as extremely important to increase outreach to families of those who are in jail. Our staff can be reached at our jail office number 349-2890 and includes:

- Vid Beldavs, Executive Director
- Tania Karnofsky, Director Jail Programming
- Linda Patton, Aftercare Facilitator and Volunteer Training Coordinator
- Joe Castle, Transition Program Coordinator and CrossRoads Facilitator
- Martha Voyles, Transition Program Coordinator
- Colleen Yeakle, Intern, Women's Program Development
- Michelle Decker-Hensley, Office Manager

Opportunities for Volunteer Action

Over 50 people have participated in NewLeaf-NewLife programming to help people entangled with the criminal justice system to make a successful reentry to the life and work of the community. Some volunteers such as Hal Taylor spends more than full time working on behalf of the people in the jail. Others make major time commitments often ranging to

20 plus hours per week. Notable among these are Frank Miller and Velma Davis who are both retired counselors who are contributing significant time to help inmates in the jail. Bruce Bundy conducts regular classes in the jail. Susan Sandberg conducts a Theater Program. Beth Lodge Regal and Amy Cornell conduct Women Writing for (a) Change. Beth Barnett conducts a writing program serving inmates from several cell blocks. Marc Haggerty does life skills training. Ron Taylor teaches poetry. Jim Hart conducts groups helping inmates to gain a more profound understanding of themselves. Several new programs are getting underway including jazzercise for the women that we will be able to report on in the next issue of SafetyNet. Planning is underway for a mentoring program that will invite congregations from the area to get involved in mentoring released inmates. If you have benefited from life's gifts and would like to give back to those who have received fewer blessings contact Tania Karnofsky at the NewLeaf-NewLife jail office to see how you can get involved. Call 812-349-2890 or email volunteer@newleaf-cej.org.

New Leaf - New Life, Inc. has received sustaining funding through the end of 2008 and is pursuing options for continuing funding into 2008 and beyond. We are very pleased to have received a grant from the Community Foundation that will allow for the printing of reentry planning workbooks for use by offenders and their families. The workbooks are designed to help offenders to plan for the challenges that they will face when they are released.

Need for a Strategic Plan

Reentry programming will be most effective within the framework of a community strategic plan for reentry that provides for all key needed services in the continuum of care - starting with food, shelter, life skills and employment opportunities. Such a strategic plan will entail partnership between the County and the City, between the Courts and the jail, and among business, social service organizations, education, and churches and other faith-based groups. We have given a label to this effort and called it the City County Reentry Task Force. The label does not matter. What matters is that our community has a strategic plan to reduce recidivism and jail overcrowding and is committed to an organized, measurable approach to implementation of strategic goals set by the community. Programming in the jail is necessary but by itself cannot achieve the goals of reducing recidivism. People who are released from jail need jobs, housing, and support among other needs. These can be difficult to secure for people with a history of addictions and criminal offenses. Without jobs, housing and support the likelihood of re-arrest and incarceration will remain high. Much of the continuum of care needed to foster successful reentry to the community from the jail already exists in the many social service agencies and programs that are doing a wonderful job within the scope of their missions. But no agency has the mission of reducing recidivism. A reentry task force can focus efforts from many cooperating groups on strategic goals to cut recidivism.

Jackson

Continued from page 17

New Leaf/ New Life can't be

thanked enough. They provided the tools. But they left the re-building phase of my life up to me. And I'm finding a deeper sense of gratitude for what is going in my life because of the significant role I'm playing in my life. I'm also thankful for seeing the importance of good, healthy relationships, especially the relationship

I now have with my Higher Power. And, my work with God as I understand Him is defined in my work with others.

Today, I am thankful. I'm thankful for life. I'm thankful for the fact I do not have to use today. I thankful I don't have to be bitter. I'm thankful that I'm better at accepting things- people I cannot change. And, I'm not afraid to step out and change the things about me that I can.

Joy of learning, seeds of hope:

"I had the wrong conceptions of theater, plays, etc. As far as participating in the group, I find it enjoyable, fun, entertaining, educational. And I don't have to be "high or drunk" to enjoy it. I learned that certain other individuals who portray the "tough guy" façade are actually the "biggest ducks in the puddle" when it comes to the enjoyment of the group and acting the parts in the plays. Also, writing a play takes a lot of thought, planning, imagination and a great deal of work.

"What things would I like more of in theater group? Nothing that's "more of" but to actually put on a play and have the play itself recorded and perhaps an article put into the Shalom Center paper, H-T or even a jail house paper stating something to the effect of staying clean, sober and working a program AA/NA. Self help and self reliance workbooks do indeed help build broken lives of self and others we have affected."

Rodney E.

"I am very grateful for having had an opportunity to participate in the theater group. I now have a new appreciation for plays, poems and music. Theater group has helped me look for the deeper meaning or message of things. All through school and growing up I would always get nervous when speaking or reading in front of a group of people. Theater group has really helped me overcome this fear and now I actually enjoy reading plays in a group setting.

"Being incarcerated is very stressful and Theater Group for people like myself who don't really get visits gives us something to look forward to every week. For that 1 to 1 1/2 hour each week you can step out of yourself and play a role in a play where you might be a king, a salesman or maybe just one of the fellas at a weekly poker game cuttin' up with your friends. Thank you, Susan, for volunteering your time to bring some light into such a dark place."

Mike C.

"I've believed for quite some time that I am a creative person. Theater Group facilitated by Susan Sandberg has given me the courage to take my creative thoughts and write plays, poems, songs of my own. It's exhilarating for me to know that I can elucidate my world as I see and live it each day within this world of confinement. When I write I dream. When I dream I'm free. And freedom is something I believe begins with my perception of my present, not my past or my future.

"Theater Group has also encouraged me to be who I am created to be, not who I think others feel I should be. Death of a Salesman really spoke to me – don't live my life behind a façade. I was given life to make my own choices, to find my own way. Theater Group has enhanced my drive to do just that – to spread my wings of faith and fly the course that is encompassed within my spirit. I'd like to have more guidance in creating, putting together plays with a message. Thank you, Susan!"

Antonio J.

Theater group participants, managers find A-Block Theater Group a release from the rigors of incarceration

Group touches on important issues

By Susan Sandberg

Susan Sandberg is the Program Coordinator for Arts Administration at IU in the School of Public and Environmental Affairs and is the current President of the Bloomington City Council. She writes this article as volunteer facilitator of the A-Block Theater Group, a New Leaf New Life program in the Monroe County Correctional Center.

The outpouring of creative energy and good humor keeps on coming from the gentlemen of A-block during their Theater Group sessions in the Monroe County Correctional Center. The Theater Group is one of several life skills programs provided inside the Correctional Center by volunteers and staff of New Leaf New Life. In this issue of the Safety Net, participants of the Theater Group share their thoughts on the work they have done, and others publish their own poetry. It is uplifting to witness the joy of learning as the gentlemen share insights from the classic plays and poetry we read and discuss.

Together we have read the Shakespeare play, Macbeth, and discussed its major themes of the abuses of power, betrayal, and the madness created by murder and revenge. The Arthur Miller classic, Death of a Salesman, prompted great discussions about personal identity, failure, and learning about your inner core and true self.

Theater Group has explored the oppression of African Americans in August Wilson's masterful play, Joe Turner's Come and Gone. This mysterious and symbolic work was read with great respect by a multi-racial group. We read a passage from Harper Lee's Pulitzer Prize-winning novel, To Kill a Mockingbird. This classic book explores the line between love and hatred, kindness and cruelty, enlightenment and ignorance. We revisited a favorite poem by Langston Hughes, "Mother to Son", through which the group discussed the meaning of "life for me ain't been no crystal stair."

While serious issues are presented in all the theatrical and literary materials, the gentlemen of A-Block enjoy a good comedy. When it gets a little heavy we mix it up a bit! After seeing the film version, the Theater Group read through the witty and sensitive Neil Simon play, Lost in Yonkers that explores the generational strains of a Jewish family and the coming of age of two young brothers in WWII-era New York City. The participants appreciated the comically sinister character of Uncle Louie, a role played by Richard Dreyfuss in the film and by Kevin Spacey on Broadway.

Coming up next, the Theater Group will see the film version of Cat on a Hot Tin Roof starring Paul Newman and Elizabeth Taylor, and then tackle this dramatic Tennessee Williams play about loss, lies and the danger of denial. After that we'll take on another Shakespeare selection.

During the recent Addicts in Recovery (AIR) graduation ceremony, the participants from A-Block shared touching testimonials of personal growth. There were many highlights of this special event from the dramatic presentation of Andy's excellent poem, "Relapse", to Mike's articulate and powerful statement of gratitude that allowed him to face his fear of public speaking. From the newest members to the longer-term mentors in the group, several have clearly stepped up as leaders in this brotherhood that strives for hope, sobriety and future success. As each member of the group struggles with personal issues, each one is growing with the assistance of program staff and volunteers. New Leaf New Life volunteers want these gentlemen to remain clean, sober and successful on the outside....and most critically, they do too! Through the joy of learning they plant seeds of hope. The efforts to provide educational and therapeutic programs to the inmates in the Monroe County Correctional Center will make a difference. I challenge others in Monroe County and Bloomington to support community re-entry programs that ensure successful living for inmates following their eventual release. Reducing crime and recidivism is a realistic goal for all who trust in the human capacity for positive change.

"About myself, Theater Group has taught me that I can let my guard down and enjoy being myself and have fun with others. I can live out other people's lives that I read about. About others, it has showed me that everyone has something in common about their own lives. In the future, I would like to be able to stand up and act out plays."

Tim T.

"I really enjoy the performing arts and I would like to go see some plays or musicals when I get out. What Theater Group has helped me learn is that we've got to follow our dreams, not someone else's aspirations for us and that people all are creative as well as perceive things differently. What I'd like to do more of in group is subject writing in poetry form or maybe some essay writing on world views, things of that nature, current events."

Aaron C.

What I learned about myself from being in the Theater Group was that I am a little more sociable than I thought. I am more comfortable about reading out loud. I can actually act as a character I portray. I would like to learn more about the theater group sessions, get together and so forth in here and on the streets. I would also like to do more plays if possible after this play is over.

Stephen D.

Theater Group has helped me realize and focus on more than drugs and alcohol. There are other ways to have fun sober. I can overcome my addictions through different curricular activities. I learned there is a lot more to reading a story or a book. It brings things to life!! I think the teachers are doing a good job with the Theater Group the way it is! I enjoy it regardless....it helps me learn more about the English language.

Andy S.

Acting isn't as easy as it appears! Theater Group taught me that there are people who really care about us. What things would I like more of in Theater Group? Co-Ed! Plays that could interact with women. I'm tired of men acting out the women's parts!

Vincent G.

I am no longer afraid of acting and reading in front of others. Theater Group has taught me that some people have a talent for it that they didn't know they had. Something I would like to see more of in Theater Group? I would like to watch a movie or make our own play.

Larry G.

Women's Voices from the Monroe County Jail

Inspired by Maya Angelou's poem "Caged Bird"

A free bird leaps and is free from the
caged bird and his bars of rage
His shadow shouts on a nightmare
scream, his feet are tied
But the caged bird sings
The free bird thinks of another breeze
I would be a red bird free
Freedom is everything to me
Being out of the cage so free
So free

My heart will sing when everything
Is good and I am a free red bird.

- Anonymous

The Kitchen Table

The kitchen table at my grandma's is an old thing. It has seen several generations of babies crawling between its sturdy legs. Even my grandma herself was a child making tent cities out of the table and chairs with her sister Barbara Jean. When it was my turn, finally, that table had sat at the same spot for almost half a century. I can remember my great grandma serving strawberry drenched angel food cake and homemade divinity after a long day in the woods with my great grandpa hunting morel mushrooms or wild blackberries. I remember the wild cat she teased inside the house. Only she could come near it. Every night at dinner it would lay across her feet and keep them warm while it waited for the bones of fried chicken or pork chops to slide down from the table top.

- Barbie Lyon Moore

Indecisions

Every day I grow with confidence
To see the way and things I've missed
No more drunken illusions
Or wasted regrets
Of things in my head
That can't be repressed
The screaming and crying I try to ignore
As I close and lock another door
Filled with pain and many doubts
I wonder if I can do without
These indecisions in my head
That leave me lost and feeling dead.

- Barbie Lyon Moore

True Love

Cannot be found
Where it does not exist
Nor can it be hidden
Where it truly does

- Cynthia King

Women Writing for (a) Change is just one of the many programs operating under the New Leaf New Life umbrella at MCJ. WWF(a)C outreach is an extension of the emerging writing project in Bloomington which inspires individuals to craft more conscious lives through the art of writing and the practices of community. Women Writing for (a) Change is a place that supports women (and men in co-ed groups) for whom writing is an important creative, spiritual, healing, and exploratory process.

- Amy Cornell, co-coordinator, Women Writing for (a) Change

Every other Saturday afternoon in Bloomington, 16 women meet in the multi-purpose room at the Monroe County Correctional Center to sit in a circle, pass a beeswax candle (yes, this was approved by Col. Wilson), listen to a poem, write and share writing with one another in an effort to explore their mistakes and the stories of their lives. Each gives voice to her experience and supports one another's journey as women and emerging writers.

I'm privileged to facilitate this circle and would likely not have found my way to Tania Karnofsky (of New Leaf-New Life) and Colonel Wilson without my connection to Nancy Long. Tania had asked Nancy if she knew of any program ideas for the jail. As Nancy writes: My mind immediately leapt to a transformative writing class I had recently completed called Women Writing for (a) Change. I shared with Tania that it isn't just another academic writing class. It's a powerful program that nurtures a sense of community where participants enhance their life skills and embark on a journey of self-discovery and change, all within a supportive atmosphere where they are taken seriously. Its appropriateness was apparent: No special tools are needed, just pencil and paper. Any woman can participate since it doesn't assume some level of education ... a woman starts where she is.

The timing was right. The need was there. We decided to team up with New Leaf-New Life to bring Women Writing for (a) Change to the Jail.

There are many layers to Women Writing for (a) Change. There's the writing, of course, but there is another aspect that is the foundation of its mission. The project is about encouraging more conscious living through the art of writing and the practices of community. It's about writing, spirit, healing and art. Each aspect informs and enhances the other.

We don't know much about the specific mistakes that bring the women to our Saturday afternoon circle. We've only just begun. The stories unfold slowly. We're a cautious bunch, tender, angry, proud, shamed, and sad. But we've heard the words: "I feel you...you're telling my story..." "I'm broken, bruised and scared..." "Tired of letting my kids down..." "If you never hope you never hurt..." "I've always wanted to stop and dig for something more..." "I carry myself on courage..." "Will I better myself when the world is better?" "Maybe I'll try to love myself..." "Spread kindness, sister, spread kindness..."

We feel a stirring. The Saturday afternoon writers lean in to their questions and celebrate "being real". When we meet, each woman continues to work with her own words as tools for her transforming life. It is an honor to behold.

- Beth Lodge-Rigal, co-coordinator, Women Writing for (a) Change (reprinted from the December 2006 issue of Safety-Net)

Untitled

Periodically, the women write on cards at the end of class. These might be reflections on the class session, comments on the gifts and challenges of the experience, anything they might want to say to a "new woman" next time.

My first day in this class. Absolutely wonderful! I felt at peace—never knowing my words and writing were so powerful. Thank you for this experience.

Whoever gets this card: please remember that no matter what you are going through, you can make it, don't be too hard on yourself for what you've done in the past, just work on being a better person in the future, I love you and I've been or still am, where you are...

Ladies remember all of what seems bad is not all bad. But face it, embrace it. And grow from it. Write about it. It will help.

Take a chance, believe in yourself and have the courage to express your words here I think the writing all these ladies share is a gift. Challenge—being honest with myself.

- Anonymous

Dear Lord Poem and Prayer

I address this letter to the Lord in a very simple way

Lord please hear my cry please hear my pray,

Why do I keep making the same mistakes over and over again,

Am I hoping to get different result

Am I hoping to win,

Why is it so hard for me to learn my lesson and do right,

Instead I'm always struggling a battle in which I have to fight,

Lord Please tell me Is there something that I really don't see

Because I'm tired of hurting my family and I'm tired of hurting me,

Lord I can only express what I feel is what I feel,

Theres no time to be fake I can only become real,

I was taught to treat others like you wanna be treated in everything you do,

An what goes around come around

I found that to be true too.

I'm really tired Lord but don't know what to do,

They tell me all the time to just put my heart and trust in you,

I understand in this life I do have choices

I need to listen and read God's word and ignore Devil's voices.

So I'm going to keep hoping and believing in you Lord today

Please hear my cry Please hear my pray

- Barbie Lyon Moore

Untitled

Dove is what I would be. It symbolizes love, peace and it just soars or glides through the air. Putting more faith and trust in God, makes me feel better at times. Kind, caring words from other people makes me feel better, or sing. I'm struggling with the unknown in my life, is me maintaining my faith and walk in and with God, especially through rough, painful and sad times...to continue building my faith, trust, and continue to do the next right thing.

- Anonymous

New jail programs have positive impact

By Colonel Bill Wilson, Jail Commander

This article was originally printed in the September 2006 issue of Safety-Net.

The Monroe County Correctional Center (Jail) is a pivotal institution that touches the lives of thousands of individuals each year. Some people in jail stay for a short period of time, and then are replaced by more people of the same kind. A key difference between jails and prisons is that jails handle non-convicted individuals and become the intake center for the criminal justice system. In addition, jails often serve as a place of last resort for individuals who belong in public health, welfare, and social service programs.

While jails are constitutionally required to provide exercise, access to the courts

and health care delivery systems, the lack of other programs has long been a criticism of jails. For the past several years the Monroe County Correctional Center has provided a variety of programs including GED and Adult Basic Education, drug and alcohol and a variety of religious programs that have served a valuable need in the facility.

On any given day, the majority of inmates held in the Monroe County Correctional Center are repeat offenders. In the past, lack of community and volunteer involvement resulted in the release of unprepared inmates. Recently the Monroe County Correctional Center and New Leaf-New Life have initiated a number of volunteer based programs to assist offenders during their period of incarceration

and additionally provide transitioning services from the jail to the community.

New volunteer based programs include: assisting inmates in "navigating" issues surrounding their release, developing more supportive families while incarcerated, improved literacy rates, substance abuse programs, "bingo" night, theater and personal inventory. Because idle inmates are more likely to cause trouble than other inmates, some level of activity is vital to running a safe and humane jail. These new programs compliment existing programs; further reduce tension, anxiety and boredom among the inmate population and continue to address the multiple needs of offenders.

Providing programs and services that address the multiple needs of inmates has

resulted in correctional staff dealing with fewer inmate behavioral management issues. The inactivity and boredom for inmates associated with incarceration has been reduced and, as a result, the relationship between inmate and staff member has improved.

The ultimate challenge faced by our community is to understand how to effectively manage an inmate population during and after incarceration so our community will be safe. It's evident that effective programs and transitional services must be utilized to provide offenders the required educational and emotional tools needed for proper jail management and successful reintegration into the community.

Probation System: Key Player in Re-Entry Planning

By Linda Brady, Chief Probation Officer, Monroe Circuit Court Probation Department

<http://www.in.gov/indcorrection/facility/pd5/general.htm>

<http://www.co.monroe.in.us/probation/index.htm>

This article was originally printed in the September 2006 issue of Safety-Net.

The mission of the Monroe County Probation Department is to promote a safer community by intervening in the lives of offenders, holding them accountable, and serving as a catalyst for positive change.

Monroe County Probation

Probation is the most common form of criminal sentence in the U.S. More offenders are sentenced to probation than to prisons and jails combined. Probationers include adult offenders whom courts place on community supervision generally in lieu of jail or prison. Probation includes court-mandated stipulations and prohibitions on certain activities. Probation often includes other conditions such as substance abuse treatment, payment of victim restitution, completing educational requirements, and obtaining/maintaining employment.

According to Indiana law, "Probation officers shall serve at the pleasure of the appointing court and are directly responsible to and subject to the orders of the court." The Monroe County Probation Department is a division of the Monroe Circuit Court. The Adult Division is located in The Justice Building, downtown Bloomington. The Juvenile Division, Drug Court and Community Corrections Program are located in a satellite office at 405 W. 7th Street.

Probation is often confused with parole. Parolees include those adults released from prison to community supervision. Indiana parole services are provided by the Department of Correction. There are eight parole districts in the state with each district office being responsible for the monitoring of offenders transferred from prison to the parole system. Monroe County is in Parole District 5 located in Columbus. There is no Monroe County parole office, therefore District 5 parole officers often meet with parolees at the Monroe County Correctional Center.

Role of Probation in Re-Entry Planning

Re-entry is not a program, it is a process. Joan Petersilia, a well known professor of criminology, writes that prisoner reentry "includes all activities and programming conducted to prepare ex-convicts to return safely to the community and to live as law abiding citizens."

The Indiana Probation Standards require Probation Officers to develop a Probation Plan with objectives based on the individual's needs and special conditions. Probation Officers have both the authority and the opportunity to assist probationers in achieving constructive change.

Indiana law permits a court to sentence offenders to a "split sentence," which means that the offender is sentenced to prison or jail for a period of time, but upon release the offender is supervised by probation, not parole. Therefore, Probation Plans must also include re-entry planning.

The reasons for the increasing use of probation are clear: probation can be provided at more than five times less cost than jail and nearly 19 times less cost than state prison. At the end of the year 2004, in the U.S. over 4.9 million adults were under Federal, State, or local probation or parole jurisdiction; approximately 4,151,100 on probation and 765,400 on parole. Among offenders on probation, 50% had been convicted for committing a misdemeanor, 49% for a felony, and 1% for other infractions. Monroe County's probation statistics reflect national trends; since the year 2002, 50% or more of our adult probation caseload has been comprised of felony offenders.

Probation Officers are ideally placed to provide re-entry planning and other re-entry services. Probation Officers are required by law to cooperate with public and private agencies and other persons concerned with the treatment or welfare of persons on probation, and assist probationers in obtaining services from those agencies and persons. In order to fulfill this duty, Probation Officers must develop networks and foster close relationships with local treatment providers, employment agencies, and other sources.

Successful re-entry planning must be active rather than passive, with the goal of fostering compliance with probation conditions rather than waiting for a violation. Our success will be measured by how many offenders succeed in refraining from further crime, compensate their victims, and become productive members of society.

Jail Bingo relieves boredom and reduces tension

By E. Wainright Martin, jail volunteer, New Leaf/New Life, St. Mark's Methodist Church

www.newleaf-newlife.org

The six of us meet in the lobby of the jail at 7:30 p.m., carry our three sets of finger-tip Bingo cards through the double security doors into the jail, and sign in. Then we pick up our sacks of prizes that have been brought in one or two days

before so that they can be checked for contraband and proceed to the elevator that whisks us up to the fourth floor. There we separate into three teams of two, each of which is escorted to an assigned cell block by a jail guard.

As we approach the cell block someone inside sees us coming and yells out

BINGO! Soon there are cries of BINGO! throughout the block and the inmates pour into the common area while the guard buzzes the control room to unlock the door and admit us to the block. The two of us enter with our Bingo equipment and prizes and the guard closes the cell block

door and leaves us facing a sea of eager orange-clad inmates.

We give out the Bingo cards, one to a customer, and begin to pile candy bars, soap bars, dried noodle soup, etc. on the small table nearest the door.

See "Bingo," page 22

Special Section: Volunteer Opportunities

Don't miss the Criminal Justice Candidate Forum!

On April 5, 1:30-3:30 Room 1B at the Monroe County Public Library there will be a public forum about criminal justice issues, including re-entry programs. The moderator will be Rev. Bill Breeden. Judge Teresa Harper will present an overview of her position regarding re-entry programs. Candidates running for judge, council, and commissioner will be presenting their views and responding to questions. The forum is being organized by Citizens for Effective Justice (www.citizensforeffectivejustice.org).

Volunteers in Medicine Volunteer Training The new Volunteers in Medicine of Monroe County free medical clinic holds orientation sessions for both medical professional and non-medical volunteers on a regular basis. Orientation is required for all volunteers before being scheduled for a shift in the clinic. Volunteers are needed to staff the clinic for 3-5 hour shifts on Mondays and Thursdays between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. and Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Minimum age is 18. For details about the next training, contact Loraine Addison at 812-353-3201 or info@vim-monroecounty.org (www.vimmonroecounty.org).

City Board and Commission Members City of Bloomington boards and commissions are filled by citizen volunteers. Most meet on a monthly basis on a set day and time. Duties, responsibilities and qualifications vary depending on the board or commission, but are available to fit almost any interest. Make your voice heard! See a full list and description of all City boards and commissions and download an application at www.bloomington.in.gov/boards.php or call the City Clerk's office at 349-3408. Minimum age is 18. For more information contact Regina Moore at 349-3408 or clerk@bloomington.in.gov (www.bloomington.in.gov).

Book Fair Year-Round Volunteers The 25th Annual American Red Cross Book Fair won't be held until October 2-7, but dedicated volunteers are needed year-round to collect and sort the book and media donations that are received daily. Ongoing help is also needed with online sales, book collection events in April and July and for the October fair set-up and tear-down. Minimum age is 18. For more information contact June Taylor at 332-7292 or jtaylor@monroe-redcross.org (www.monroe-redcross.org).

Food Pantry Assistants Learn how a food pantry operates at the Monroe County United Ministries. Pick up donations, weigh, sort and log food donations, stock pantry shelves as needed and prepare meal sacks for distribution. Minimum age is 16 unless accompanied by a parent. For more information contact: Patrick Curry at 339-3429 or pacurry@indiana.edu (www.bloomington.in.us/~mcum).

Domestic Violence Volunteer Training Middle Way House is seeking new volunteers to help them maintain the level of service they provide to victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. Both women and men are strongly encouraged to attend one of the upcoming new volunteer trainings, which are required for all volunteers. Opportunities in over 20 different program areas include childcare, crisis line, legal advocacy, house management and youth mentoring. Pre-registration is NOT required. Minimum age for most programs is 18. To inquire about the next training, contact: 333-7404 (www.middlewayhouse.org).

Adult Education Tutors The MCCSC Adult Education program offers many services to local residents. Patient, welcoming and flexible tutors age 18 and older are needed to work with adult learners in reading, math, preparation for the GED exam, computer basics or ESL. All tutoring is done under the supervision of a licensed teacher.



Make a difference in these students' lives while giving to the community, building lasting relationships and even boosting your own knowledge. Individuals interested in helping with outreach and distribution of marketing materials are also welcome. Minimum age is 18. For more information contact: Melanie Hunter at 330-7731 ext. 3 or mhunter@mccsc.edu (www.adult.mccsc.edu).

Fundraising Support Catholic Charities Bloomington is seeking enthusiastic volunteers to do a variety of tasks supporting their special fundraising events. This can be done on an ongoing or one-time basis. Hours required would vary according to the event. Minimum age is 16. For more information contact: Marsha McCarty at 332-1262 or mmccarty@catholiccharitiesbtown.org (www.CatholicCharitiesBtown.org).

Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Inc.

Contact: Annie Brookshire, 332-0999 or volunteer@monroecommunitykitchen.com

Board Members

Seeking volunteers to serve on the Board of Directors. Duties include governance and oversight of Community Kitchen goals, objectives, operations and finances. Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday of each month. Members are expected to serve on one committee.

Kitchen Preparation and Serving Assistants

Volunteers make this kitchen run! You can help prepare and serve free meals six days a week for in-house and carry-out patrons. No previous experience is needed, just a willingness to help. There are two volunteer shifts daily Monday through Saturday: a prep shift from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. and a serving/cleanup shift from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Five volunteers are needed per shift, per day, those age 14 and older may volunteer without an adult.

Nutrition Links Delivery Drivers

Drivers are needed to deliver meals to HIV+ clients daily. Drivers can sign up for once-a-month or more often, but a regular commitment is desired.

Summer Breakfast Prep and Delivery

Your help is needed to prepare, assemble and deliver free sack breakfasts that are distributed to children in low-income neighborhoods in Bloomington during the summer months. No previous experience is needed, just a willingness to help. The prep shift is from 7 to 8:30 a.m. The delivery shift runs from 8:30 a.m. to noon. Delivery volunteers help the driver load the van and hand out breakfasts at each stop on the route.

Summer Kitchen Volunteers

Summer is anything but slow at the Kitchen and the need for short term volunteers is critical. You can help one day a week, or one day a month with meal preparation from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. or meal serving (cafeteria-style) from 3:30-6:30 p.m. Monday - Saturday.

See "Volunteer," page 23

Bingo

Continued from page 21

After the first bingo we continue until there have been at least three winners, and then we start a new game. The players really get into it. As the game progresses and some players get close to a bingo they start to cheer for the number they need. In the crowded blocks it can get rather noisy and hard for the caller to make himself heard, but we cope because the residents there really need the relaxation of Bingo. The women are especially enthusiastic about

playing Bingo.

After about an hour we are usually down to a dozen prizes on the table and we end the night by playing a game of regular Bingo where we play until all the prizes are gone. The inmates turn in their cards and some of them help us gather up our Bingo equipment and put it back in the box. Many inmates come down, shake our hands, and thank us for coming in. We buzz the control room and a guard comes and lets us out and escorts us back to the elevator.

Jail Bingo is a New Leaf/New Life

program co-sponsored by the jail administration and members of St. Mark's United Methodist Church. It is our hope that Bingo accomplishes the following:

- * Lets those in the jail know that someone out there cares about them;
- * Relieves the oppressive boredom that comes with being crowded into a small space without anything to do 24 hours a day, seven days a week, for months;
- * Reduces the tension in the jail and makes life easier for both the inmates and the jail officers.

It seems to be working, as the inmates tell us that Bingo is the best thing that happens in the jail, and the jail officers report that Bingo night is their easiest night of the week.

Doing Bingo in the jail also affects each of us volunteers. We are not the same as we were before. Virtually everyone who has agreed to try it once, often with considerable trepidation about going into the jail blocks, has wanted to continue to help with Bingo. Our group has grown from two to twenty regular volunteers who share Bingo leadership each week.

Volunteer

Continued from page 22

Hoosier Hills Food Bank

Contact: Stephanie Solomon, 334-8374 or volunteer@hhfoodbank.org

CSFP Box Preparation

Help package 40 pound boxes of Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) food to be distributed to low-income senior citizens in three southern Indiana counties.

Driver Assistants

Load donated food or pick-up donations. A short term commitment is o.k.

Office Assistants

Help with filing, data entry, mass mailings and various office duties.

Repack Assistants

Groups and individuals are needed to help repack donated prepared foods as part of the Meal Share Program. Repack sessions take place on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings.

TEFAP Staging

Get a workout while volunteering. Help sort bulk food to be distributed to partnering agencies through the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Warehouse Assistants

Help with donation pick-ups, deliveries to social service agencies and maintenance of warehouse.

Martha's House

Contact: 332-1444 (shelter) or 355-6841 (admin.)

Administration Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to be the primary people to answer phone calls and make appropriate referrals to other agencies. Administration duties may also include making copies, typing letters, etc. Coverage is needed between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday. Several people can combine part-time hours to help provide this coverage.

Childcare

Martha's House provides supportive housing to people experiencing homelessness in the Bloomington community. Volunteers can help support this mission and the families working their way out of homelessness by providing childcare for families during required meeting times.

Donations Volunteers

Primary duties of this position include sorting and processing all in-kind donations and keeping records of the supply of clothes, shoes, and other donations. Volunteers need to arrange a consistent schedule. Individuals interested in delivery and pick-up of donations are also needed.

Education Volunteers

People interested in working with homeless residents in a one-on-one situation and/or teaching education programs to small groups of residents are needed. People are also needed to coordinate social activities for graduates of the program. The schedule varies depending on what type of needs and programs are being operated.

Outreach Volunteers

This position has a wide set of possibilities from staffing booths at events in the community (including the county fair) to passing out blankets and clothes to homeless people who choose not to live at Martha's House. The schedule varies depending on current needs.

Middle Way House

Contact: Colleen Yeakle, 333-7404 or mwhouse@bloomington.in.us

Adult Tutor

Volunteers work with tenants and teens one-to-one to help them with math, writing and computer skills. Through encouragement and support, volunteers help women and teens at every level from GED work to college-level work.

Community Reception Volunteer

Volunteers work with staff to oversee building security and respond to telephone calls and visitors at the door. Volunteers also provide kind and friendly interactions with tenants while maintaining confidentiality and safety for women, youth and children in the building.

Crisis Line Volunteer

Crisis line volunteers offer a meaningful connection to those facing the physical dangers and emotional pain caused by intimate partner abuse. Volunteers provide non-judgmental support and resource information to callers in crisis, 24 hours a day.

Food Works Assistant

Put your office and computer skills to work for Food Works of Middle Way House, a full service catering business owned and operated by Middle Way House. Food Works provides opportunities for women escaping domestic abuse situations to become economically self-sufficient in a safe and supportive work environment. Your help is needed in the office to assist with cost tracking and some of the administrative duties of the business. Familiarity with Microsoft Excel and Word preferred. (www.middleway-foodworks.org)

Legal Advocacy Volunteer

Volunteers monitor local hearings related to domestic and sexual violence, assist program coordinators with research projects and paperwork, and accompany clients to court.

Youth Programs Volunteer

Volunteers form supportive, productive and fun connections with children by volunteering in the childcare, serving as tutors for school-aged children, and by working as mentors.

Midwest Pages to Prisoners Project

Contact: Tess Hannah, 339-8710 or midwestpagestoprisoners@yahoo.com

Letter Readers & Book Finders/Packers

Volunteers read request letters sent by people who are incarcerated, locate books among the donated materials that would best fit the person's request, write a letter back to that person and then package their

selected books to be mailed. Walk-in volunteer hours are Mondays from 7-9 p.m. during the school year, Thursdays from 7-11 p.m. and Sundays from 2-5 p.m. All ages are welcome!

Returned Package Pickup

Volunteers are needed to pick-up returned packages from the Woodbridge Post Office and bring them to the Midwest Pages to Prisoners space. This should happen on a weekly basis and requires a time commitment of less than one hour.

Shelving & Sorting Books

Volunteers are needed to sort through materials donated to the Midwest Pages to Prisoners Project, discard unneeded materials, identify texts of special interest and sort and shelve books by subject. Shelving/sorting volunteers are encouraged to work during a regular volunteer work session on Mondays from 7-9 p.m. during the school year, Thursdays from 7-11 p.m. or Sundays from 2-5 p.m.

Weekly Mailing

Volunteers are needed to take packaged requests to the post office and mail them. Typically, mailings occur on Saturdays, but alternate arrangements can be made. As six tubs of letters are often mailed, volunteers must provide some means of transporting the packages to the post office. Mailing the packages requires a two hour time commitment each week, but volunteers can coordinate with each other to alternate weeks.

Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM)

Contact: Rebecca Gordan, 339-3429 or mcumhelp@bloomington.in.us

Childcare Kitchen Volunteers

Assist in the childcare kitchen and dining room helping to prepare and set up lunch for children ages 2-5. Position open on Monday through Friday from 10:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m. Must have limited physical, current TB test and drug test within 30 days.

Children's Activity Volunteers

If you are creative, energetic, or just like working with children, we have a volunteer opportunity for you! Volunteers are needed to work with the children as Learning Center Assistants. Training is provided. A TB test, drug screen and recent physical are required for volunteers working more than 8 hours a month.

Min. Age: 18

Classroom Volunteer

Want to make a difference in the life of a child? Volunteers are needed to read stories, assist teachers and play with the preschool children. Requirements vary with the number of volunteer hours, but may include a physical, TB test and background screening.

Food Pantry Assistants

Learn how a food pantry operates by weighing, sorting and logging food donations, stocking pantry shelves as needed and preparing sacks for distribution. Volunteers must be able to consistently lift 20 pounds.

Greenhouse Project Volunteers

Got a green thumb? Help launch this new greenhouse project for the five preschool classrooms and summer camp program. Volunteers will have the opportunity to organize greenhouse projects, grow demonstration plants for classroom use, provide training to teachers and organize and maintain the greenhouse. Those with previous greenhouse or plant experience are encouraged to participate, but anyone with interests in this area is welcome to get involved.

Maintenance Assistant

Add life to buildings and equipment while assisting the staff with daily tasks such as changing light bulbs and furnace filters, light carpentry and general repair. General fix-it skills are needed 3-4 hours per week.

Office Assistant

Assist the Monroe County United Ministries staff by answering telephones, routing calls, taking messages, copying, filing, assisting with bulk mailings and performing other office tasks. Volunteers must be dependable and have appropriate office dress. Previous office experience is preferred.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

Contact: Libby Yarnelle, 355-6843 or libby@mhcfoodpantry.org

Community Garden

Help keep fresh produce on the shelves by volunteering several times weekly at two different garden sites to work on vegetable plots.

Food Pantry Volunteers

Pantry volunteers provide frontline service. Position includes unloading and stocking food, greeting and helping clients. All are welcome!

Nutrition Education Volunteers

Educate food pantry patrons about health and nutrition. Volunteers are needed to cook food for sample tables, lead workshops or develop nutrition resources. Will work with your schedule and interests.

Spanish Outreach Coordinator

Spanish-speaking volunteers are sought to coordinate and cultivate the relationship between Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and the Spanish-speaking community and organizations serving Latinos. Projects include developing resources in the Spanish language for clients.

Volunteer Shopper

Be a part of bringing healthy food to the people who need it! Volunteer shoppers pick up and deliver food from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. Morning shifts are available on Mondays, Wednesdays or Thursdays. Volunteers must be able to lift boxes of food. Families are welcome.

See "Volunteer," page 24

Special Section: Hispanic/Latino Programs

Lenguas Evolucionan

Por: Gerardo Mares

Ser bilingüe y multicultural hoy en día definitivamente cambia la perspectiva de muchas personas. Tal vez sea la manera de mirar el mundo a través de dos culturas diferentes o algo tan importante como es el uso de dos idiomas en una base diaria. En esta nueva generación tenemos que reconocer que estamos creciendo en un país donde dos idiomas son muy común ser usados o escuchados.

Una ventaja de muchos estudiantes es que es muy probable que aprendan otro idioma con los recursos que tenemos disponibles. Esto suena muy bien y conveniente ya que vivimos en un país donde el hablar dos idiomas crea ventaja, pero también trae algunos cambios en las culturas y en la lengua que hemos aprendido hablar.

Tales cambios pueden incluir el usar un

vocabulario intercambiado que es usado para referirse a una cosa en dos idiomas diferentes. Mientras las nuevas generaciones crecen escuchando los dos idiomas diferentes a la vez, es muy probable que intercambien los dos idiomas para formar un vocabulario nuevo y popular que muchos reconocen como el "Spanglish" (español e inglés intercambiados o combinados). Una vez aprendido dos lenguas, es difícil para algunas personas, especialmente los estudiantes jóvenes tratar de diferenciar la palabra correcta en los dos idiomas. En muchos casos hay una falta de enfoque al escribir, leer, o talvez pronunciar correctamente.

Ve "Lenguas," página 25

Evolving Language

By Gerardo Mares

Being bilingual and multicultural definitely changes one's perspectives. It could be the way in which we see the world through two different cultures, or something so functional as using two languages on a daily basis. We have to recognize that the new generation of Latinos is growing up in a country where bilingualism is common and becoming more so every day.

The tremendous linguistic resources that we have at our disposal are a great advantage for many students. This sounds very beneficial, since speaking two languages can be a great advantage. But for those whose language acquisition comes about largely through experience bilingualism

brings with it many cultural changes, some subtle and others a good deal more dramatic.

Such changes often include the use of a lexicon that interchanges words between the two different vocabularies. While the new generation grows up listening to two different languages at the same time, it is quite likely that the two tongues will be combined in some way to form a new popular vocabulary. The resultant idiom is sometimes referred to as "Spanglish," which is, in its most basic form, simply a rather crude combination of Spanish and English.

See "Languages," page 25

Volunteer

Continued from page 23

My Sister's Closet of Monroe County, Inc.

Contact: JoAnne Bunnage, 335-6603 or jbunnage@indiana.edu

Fund Raising Coordinator

Organization is in need of a fundraising coordinator to develop and organize fundraisers throughout the year. Coordinator would work directly with volunteer coordinators and other board members.

Promotion & Fundraising

Volunteers are needed to help get the word out about the hurdles low-income women face trying to become self-sufficient; to help with coordinating and organizing fundraisers, grant writing and brochure development; and to help keep the web site current.

New Leaf - New Life, Inc.

Contact: Tania Karnofsky, 812-857-4999 or tania@newleaf-cej.org

Coordinates volunteers who serve as "navigators" for inmates and those released from jail to find sources of support for re-entry into the community.

Salvation Army

Contact: Monica Clemons, 336-4310 ext.10 or monica_clemons@usc.salvation-army.org

Clothes Inspector

Quality inspection of clothing for free give away and general sales to the public.

Receptionist

Is customer service your forte? Help to meet client needs by volunteering as a receptionist in their downtown facil-

ity. Answer the phone, assist in the food pantry and greet clients and visitors in the social service office. Office skills, including knowledge of Windows, as well as using a copy machine are needed. Time commitment is 3-4 hours per week.

Thrift Store Staff

Volunteers sort and hang clothing in preparation for the daily free distribution to the needy. Store is open Monday through Saturday 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.

Shalom Community Center

Contact: Pam Kinnaman, 334-5734 or pam@shalomcommunitycenter.org

Clerical Assistant

Seeking 2 volunteers to take a 4 hour shift Monday - Friday between 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. to assist with general clerical duties. Volunteers must have computer skills in word processing, data entry and email. Volunteers will work with confidential information and must be trustworthy. A criminal history check is required.

Employment Program Assistants

Help people with low incomes find suitable jobs, including assessing candidates' potential, resume preparation and dealing with employers.

Hospitality Volunteers

Volunteers greet visitors, answer the telephone, take messages and register clients for services. Shifts available Monday-Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. Minimum commitment is a two-hour shift, one day per week.

Legal Professionals

Assist people with low incomes by assuming limited caseloads on a pro-bono basis.

Shalom Ambassador

Represent the Center at the Bloomington Community Farmers' Market. Volunteers work a 2½ hour shift on Saturday mornings providing outreach to the community. Volunteer must have their own transportation and be willing to transport a small table, display and box of flyers.

Shalom Holiday Help

When IU students are gone, guests at the Shalom Community Center are still here. Meals need to be cooked and served; the kitchen needs to be cleaned up; and the phone needs to be answered. Can you give at least two hours a week in the short term to help Shalom get through the student holiday breaks until the student volunteers return and get settled into their schedules again?

Ugly Quilt Volunteer Sewers

Sleeping bags can save lives. It is a harsh fact that for the homeless population it is sometimes easier to find food than warmth. The Center is looking for volunteers to help construct "ugly quilt" sleeping bags to help protect the homeless from freezing temperatures and frostbite. Instructions are provided and donated materials are welcome. More information can be found on www.reese.org/sharon/uglyquilt.htm.

Web Site Help

Seeking a volunteer to be trained in working with the Center's wonderful website, who can make a commitment to oversee the site over an extended period of time. If you have an interest in learning a user-friendly web site program and helping out a great local nonprofit agency at the same time this could be a

great volunteer opportunity! Shalom will provide the training, and the volunteer will input information with support from the Center's Publicity Publications and Outreach Committee. Once trained, most of the work could be done at home.

South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP)

Contact: Beth Pankoski, 339-3447 ext. 233 or beth@sccap.monroe.in.us

Energy Assistance Program Caseworker Assistants

Provides aid toward individuals' energy costs during the cold months and provides protection from the possibility of being disconnected. Duties may include helping with the assembly and distribution of program information and packets for clients, helping with client intake and documentation and contacting utility vendors on behalf of the client and agency.

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Contact: Donna Wenstrup, 876-1974 ext. 301 or salber@bloomingtonsvdp.org

Furniture Volunteers

Volunteers pick-up and deliver donated furniture to the warehouse. Volunteers are also needed for furniture distribution on Saturday mornings at 9 a.m.

Home Visit Assistant

Accompany St. Vincent de Paul members to visit those in need in the Bloomington area. Provide an empathetic and compassionate ear as you listen to their needs. Each visit, including travel time, lasts about an hour and is scheduled at your convenience.

Asistencia de Los Impuestos para Hispanohablantes

Por: *Melissa Britton, miembro de la junta directiva del Centro Comunal Latino*

Este año, las personas hispanohablantes tienen un lugar designado para la preparación de impuestos el cual es gratis, privado, y lo más importante es que ofrece servicios en español. El Centro Comunal Latino se ha unido a la comunidad en los esfuerzos de proveer su propia asistencia de impuestos bajo el tutelaje del programa VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance). El sitio y personal voluntario ha sido coordinado a través de los esfuerzos de Programa Latinos de la Ciudad de Bloomington y el espacio y ambiente cordial está ofrecido por El Centro Comunal Latino (CCL). Planes para este sitio comenzaron en noviembre del año pasado y han estado ganando impulso desde entonces. Este sitio abrió el 2 de febrero y continuará hasta el 15 de abril. Visitantes pueden venir sin cita cada martes 3PM-7PM y todos los Sábados 9AM-12PM.

Todos los voluntarios(as) tuvieron que participar por un entrenamiento riguroso ofrecido por el IRS (Internal Revenue Service) y por Ivy Tech. Los voluntarios(as) completaron 12 horas de entrenamiento donde tuvieron que tomar exámenes de certificación antes de poder comenzar a ayudar a otros con la preparación de impuestos. Seis de las doce horas de entrenamiento fueron completamente dedicados a situaciones específicas con las cuales los voluntarios(as) podrían encontrarse sirviendo a la población de hispanohablantes. Ya sea que los clientes necesiten solicitar el ITIN (Número de Identificado Personal del Contribuyente), declarar impuestos del año anterior, o declara dependientes que viven en otro país, los voluntarios(as) están preparados a ayudarlos.

Ve "Impuestos," página 26

Tax Assistance available for Spanish Speakers

By *Melissa Britton, Board Member of El Centro Comunal Latino*

This year Spanish speakers have a place to go to do their taxes that is free, confidential and most importantly, staffed by other Spanish speakers. El Centro Comunal Latino has joined the community outreach effort on behalf of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program by starting their own tax preparation site. The site and its volunteers are coordinated through the efforts of the City of Bloomington's Latino Programs and the space and welcome environment are provided by El Centro Comunal Latino (CCL). Planning for this site started back in November of last year and has been gaining momentum ever since. The site opened on February 2nd and will run until April 15th. Visitors can come on a walk-in basis on Tuesdays 3-7 PM and

Saturdays 9AM-12PM.

All volunteers had to undergo rigorous training provided by the Internal Revenue Service and Ivy Tech Community College. Volunteers completed 12 hours of training and were required to pass the certification exams before they could begin preparing taxes. Six of those training hours were completely dedicated to the specific situations those volunteers may encounter when serving the Spanish speaking population.

Whether they need to apply for an ITIN (Individual Taxpayer Identification Number), file taxes from previous years, or claim dependents who reside in another country, volunteers are prepared to assist them.

See "Taxes," page 26

Lenguas

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Ser bilingüe y multicultural hoy en día

definitivamente cambia la perspectiva de muchas personas. Tal vez sea la manera de mirar el mundo a través de dos culturas diferentes o algo tan importante como es el uso de dos idiomas en una base diaria. En esta nueva generación tenemos que reconocer que estamos creciendo en un país donde dos idiomas son muy común ser usados o escuchados.

Una ventaja de muchos estudiantes es que es muy probable que aprendan otro idioma con los recursos que tenemos disponibles. Esto suena muy bien y conveniente ya que vivimos en un país donde el hablar dos idiomas crea ventaja, pero también trae algunos cambios en las culturas y en la lengua que hemos aprendido hablar.

Tales cambios pueden incluir el usar un

vocabulario intercambiado que es usado para referirse a una cosa en dos idiomas diferentes. Mientras las nuevas generaciones crecen escuchando los dos idiomas diferentes a la vez, es muy probable que intercambien los dos idiomas para formar un vocabulario nuevo y popular que muchos reconocen como el "Spanglish" (español e inglés intercambiados o combinados). Una vez aprendido dos lenguas, es difícil para algunas personas, especialmente los estudiantes jóvenes tratar de diferenciar la palabra correcta en los dos idiomas. En muchos casos hay una falta de enfoque al escribir, leer, o talvez pronunciar correctamente.

Para dar un ejemplo la palabra "printear" es usada para referirse a imprimir que viene de la palabra "print" (en inglés). O talvez algo muy popular como usar la palabra "biles" para referirse a una cuenta/factura que viene de la palabra

"bills" (en inglés).

Una vez que hemos introducido nuevas palabras a nuestro vocabulario, es difícil tratar de diferenciar cuando se pueden utilizar apropiadamente y puede crecer en algo inevitable o difícil de controlar. Otro punto que es muy curioso es que aun reconociendo que la palabra no es correcta la usamos normalmente, asíéndola parte de nuestro vocabulario. Este punto levanta la pregunta si eso está bien o está mal?

Basándonos en personas que tienen los mismos puntos de vista tal vez no encuentran problema al expresarse usando los dos idiomas, pero también tenemos que reconocer que no todas las personas usan el bilingüe de la misma forma, ya que muchas personas lo consideran un rompimiento de las normas culturales.

Uno de los problemas que enfrentan las nuevas generaciones es que son fluyentes

en inglés pero talvez no en español. El inglés lo usarán la mayoría del tiempo con un porcentaje mucho más elevado ya que el español solo en el hogar o cuando sea necesario. Muchas veces estos jóvenes saben lo que quieren decir en inglés pero talvez es difícil traducir ya que su vocabulario en español puede ser mínimo. En estos casos es muy probable que utilicen una palabra en inglés para referirse a algo en español.

Después de analizar como nuestras nuevas generaciones están empezando a cambiar e intercambiar palabras del inglés al español, podemos analizar que en un futuro talvez estas palabras serán más dominantes y serán usadas por muchas generaciones que vengan. Si una persona es bilingüe es muy probable que "mixtie" o combine las palabras del inglés al español, ya sea printear o imprimir.

Languages

Continued from page 24

As an example we can use the English verb

"to print." The standard Spanish equivalent is "imprimir," but in Spanglish usage this gets changed to "printear." The "ar" ending attached here corresponds to the ending for a standard Spanish first conjugation verb thus making the new word a rather sloppy combination of English vocabulary with Spanish grammar.

Another popular example might be the English plural noun "bills." This becomes "biles" in Spanglish, whereas the standard Spanish would be "cuentas" or "facturas".

Once we begin to introduce such made-up words into our everyday speech it becomes more and more difficult to differentiate between these terms and correct usage in either Spanish or English. The new way of speaking takes on a life of its own, and begins to supplant both of its parent languages. Another curiously interesting point is that a certain social pressure seems to come into play, which dictates that a speaker must use a Spanglish term even if he or she knows the correct Spanish usage. In other words, a kind of cultural norm becomes established among Spanglish speakers. This raises the question as to whether such popular

colloquially-driven linguistic changes are actually such a good thing, since Spanglish, at least at present, is still largely the province of a fairly limited cultural minority.

A very common problem faced by the new immigrant generation is that many become fluent in English, but may not be quite so adept at Spanish. English may be used the vast majority of the time while Spanish is only spoken in the home with parents or grandparents. Many times our younger peers know what they want to say in English, but it might be difficult for them to express these same ideas in standard Spanish because their vocabulary

is relatively limited. In such cases, English words are used in place of the unknown Spanish. It simply becomes easier and easier from then on just to continue plugging in English words whenever necessary rather than to learn their Spanish equivalents.

It is inevitable, as the two languages as well as their corresponding cultures come more and more into contact, that they will begin to exert greater and greater influences, both positive and negative, upon each other. The outcome of this linguistic and cultural give and take is somewhat difficult to predict at present. In any case, the future most certainly promises to be quite interesting and exciting.

Las enfermedades del corazón

Por: Jessica Wetmore

Las enfermedades del corazón matan a más latinos o hispanos que cualquier otra enfermedad, incluyendo el cáncer. Por eso, en febrero, el mes del corazón, tenemos que prestar todavía más atención al tema y aprender a tener una vida más sana. Aunque los latinos son un diez por ciento menos probables de contraer una enfermedad del corazón y los hombres latinos son un treinta por ciento menos probables de morir de la enfermedad, sigue siendo la causa de muerte de 28.6 por ciento de los 122,000 latinos que mueren cada año.

Primero, hay que saber de que se habla cuando se dice "enfermedad del corazón;" más que nada, se refiere a cualquier problema con el vaso sanguíneo que pueda resultar en un ataque del corazón. Ésta condición es para la vida entera; no hay una cura y sólo se va a empeorar a no ser que uno cambie sus hábitos diarios. Hay dos tipos de factores de riesgo: los que uno puede controlar y los que no se puede controlar. Uno de los que uno no puede controlar es el historial clínico familiar, pero sí se puede controlar otros hábitos.

Ve "Corazon," página 27

Facts about heart disease

By Jessica Wetmore

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for Latinos or Hispanics, above even cancer. Because of that, in February, heart disease month, we need to pay even more attention to the topic and learn how to live a healthier life. Even though Latinos are ten percent less likely to have heart disease and Latino men are thirty percent less likely to die from the disease, heart disease is still the cause of death for 28.6 percent of the 122,000 Latinos that die each year.

First, we must understand what is

meant by "heart disease;" this primarily refers to any problems with your blood vessels that can result in a heart attack. This condition is a lifelong one that has no cure and will only get worse if you do not change your daily habits. There are two types of risk factors: those you can control and those you cannot. One of the factors you cannot control is medical family history, but you can change other habits.

See "Heart Disease," page 27

Taxes

Continued from page 25

their Spanish speaking skills while helping community members but when you tack on 12 hours of training, exams and then 2 months of preparing taxes, they tend to get a little overwhelmed. That is why our large group of 25 interested volunteers is now a much smaller, dedicated group of

Many of our volunteers jump at the chance to use

8 volunteers who show up every Tuesday and Saturday just to have the chance to deliver good news to clients. Our clients are usually very pleased when we tell them the total of their reimbursements and even more pleased when we tell them there is no charge for this service. They are able to ask questions, go through the forms with us, and put their trepidations to rest. We field a lot of questions and take satisfaction in knowing that our clients

chance to use their Spanish speaking skills while helping community members but when you tack on 12 hours of training, exams and then 2 months of preparing taxes, they tend to get a little overwhelmed. That is why our large group of 25 interested volunteers is now a much smaller, dedicated group of

Impuestos

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ven con gusto la oportunidad de utilizar su conocimiento del español, pero cuando a eso se añaden 12 horas de entrenamiento, exámenes, y 2 meses preparando impuestos, la carga se pone un poco pesada. Este es la razón por la cual nuestro grupo original de 25 voluntarios(as) interesados es mucho mas pequeño ahora, con un grupo final de 8

Muchos de nuestros voluntarios(as)

personas que se presentan todo los martes y sábados para ayudar y darle buenas noticias a los clientes. Nuestros clientes generalmente están contentos cuando les decimos la cantidad total de reembolso y quedan aun más contentos cuando les informamos que el servicio es gratis. Ellos pueden hacer preguntas, revisar los formularios con nosotros y poner sus preocupaciones a un lado. Recibimos muchas preguntas y nos satisface saber que nuestros clientes se sienten con confianza para

Centro de Recursos Familiares Templeton-Shalom

Por: Nancy Soto, Personal de Servicios para Familias Latinas Shalom

Los padres son los primeros y mejores maestros de sus hijos. Los niños cuyos padres se involucran en su escuela sacan mejores calificaciones. La investigación científica lo comprueba, ¡y el Centro de Recursos Familiares les ayuda a los padres a lograrlo! Ubicado en la escuela primaria Templeton, el Centro de Recursos Familiares Templeton-Shalom ofrece programas, información y servicio de referencia enfocados en apoyar a los padres en criar a los hijos de forma sana, segura y que sean buenos alumnos. Las oportunidades para las familias incluyen:

Cuentacuentos para pre-escolares: El 2o y 4o lunes de cada mes, de 10-11 a.m.

en la biblioteca de la escuela Templeton. Cuentos, cantos, proyectos de arte, una merienda liviana ¡y un libro gratis para llevarse a casa!

Grupo de Juego Pre-escolar: Para bebés hasta pre-Kinder y sus padres o quienes los cuidan. Jueguen, conversen, lean, coman una merienda, hagan proyectos de arte juntos en la cafetería de la escuela Templeton. Los viernes de 9-11 a.m.

Club de Cereal: Tiempo para jugar y hacer proyectos de arte para bebés y niños de 0-5 años y sus padres o quienes los cuidan.

Templeton-Shalom Family Resource Center

By Nancy Soto, Shalom Latino Services Staff

Parents are children's first and best teachers. Children whose parents are involved in their school do better in school. The research shows it, the Family Resource Center helps parents do it! Located in Templeton Elementary school, the Templeton-Shalom Family Resource Center offers programming, information and referral designed to support parents in raising safe, healthy kids who do well in school. Opportunities for families include:

Pre-school Story Hour: 2nd and 4th Mondays of the month, 10-11 a.m. in Templeton Elementary School Media

Center (library). Stories, singing, crafts, snack and a free book to take home!

Pre-school Play Group: Infants through pre-Kinders and their parents or caregivers spend time playing, talking, reading, snacking, and doing arts and crafts together in the Templeton Elementary school café. Friday mornings, 9-11 a.m.

Cereal Club: Play time and arts and crafts for infants through pre-Kinders and their parents or caregivers. Take home a FREE box of cereal and a book!

feel comfortable enough to ask any kind of question. Sometimes they have nothing to do with taxes, but we are happy to help however we can. Site information is as follows:

El Centro Comunal Latino (located in the MCPL VITAL wing, Room 11)
303 East Kirkwood Avenue, Bloomington, IN
355-7513 / 349-3860 (contact Melissa

Britton with any questions)

El Centro Comunal Latino (CCL) is a grassroots, community-based organization that seeks to promote communication and understanding among service agencies and the Latino community in order to facilitate their integration and encourage active Latina/o participation in the greater Bloomington community (Monroe County).

355-7513 / 349-3860 (para mas información, contacte a Melissa Britton)

hacer preguntas. A veces las preguntas no son relacionadas a impuestos sin embargo nosotros estamos contentos de ayudar en lo que podamos. La información del sitio es:

El Centro Comunal Latino (ubicada en la Biblioteca Publica del Condado del Monroe, el área VITAL, Salón 11)
303 East Kirkwood Avenue, Bloomington, IN

El Centro Comunal Latino (CCL) es una organización comunitaria sin fines de lucro que busca promover la comunicación y el entendimiento entre las agencias de servicio y la comunidad Latina en Bloomington para poder facilitar su integración y participación dentro de la gran comunidad de Bloomington en el condado de Monroe.

Bloomington's Hispanic/Latino presence: A gift and a challenge

By Tim Gonzalez, Director of Multicultural Ministry, St. Paul Catholic Center

www.lacaratina.org
www.elcentrocomunal.org
www.bloomington.in.gov/cfrd/latino.php

This article was originally printed in the July 2007 issue of Safety-Net

The week of April 29th to May 5th was a busy one for local Hispanics and Latinos. It started off with the IU men's soccer team taking on Mexico's under-20 National team. If you have ever wondered "where" are the Hispanics/Latinos in Bloomington, then Bill Armstrong Stadium held your answer with a large and spirit-filled crowd cheering the Mexican team on to a 2-0 victory. On Tuesday of that week many local Hispanics traveled to Indianapolis to join thousands across the country in marching for comprehensive immigration reform. On Saturday, to end the week, El Centro Comunal Latino and the City of Bloomington's Community and Family Resources Department cosponsored a Cinco de Mayo festival at 3rd Street Park, and many of the Hispanic/Latino students from IU celebrated their graduation with family and loved ones. In many ways, the week's events reflect

the gift and challenge the Hispanic/Latino presence represents to Bloomington and Monroe County.

Who are local Hispanics/Latinos? According to the 2000 census, there were 2,530 Hispanics in Monroe County making up 2.09% of the population. Many of us that work with local Latinos on a regular basis estimate the current population is about 4,000. Local Hispanics/Latinos are both long-term residents and recent arrivals to Bloomington. We are of European, African, Asian and Indigenous descent. The result is Hispanics/Latinos that are "white", "black", "brown", and every shade and feature in between. We are faculty, staff, and students at both IU and Ivy Tech. We are professionals in the community, and we are laborers in restaurants, hotels, and construction. We are 2nd, 3rd and 4th generation U.S. born Hispanics/Latinos as American as nachos at the ballpark. We are foreign born naturalized citizens and legal residents. And yes, some of us crossed a river or a desert in the dark of night to get here, to improve our fortunes, and often to escape unspeakable horror back home.

See "Gifts," page 28

La Presencia Latino/Hispana en Bloomington: Retos y Contribuciones

Por Tim Gonzalez, Director of Multicultural Ministry, St. Paul Catholic Center

www.lacaratina.org
www.elcentrocomunal.org
www.bloomington.in.gov/cfrd/latino.php

La semana del 29 de abril al 5 de Mayo fue una muy ocupada para los Latinos e Hispanos locales. Empezó con el enfrentamiento entre el equipo varonil de fútbol soccer de IU ante Selección Nacional Mexicana sub-20. Si alguna vez se han preguntado "donde" se encuentran los Latinos/Hispanos en Bloomington, el Estadio Bill Amnstrong les hubiera dado la respuesta con una inmensa multitud llena de espíritu apoyando al equipo Mexicano en su Victoria de 2-0. El Martes de esa semana muchos Hispanos locales se dirigieron a Indianápolis para unirse a otros miles a lo largo y ancho del país para participar en la marcha por la reforma migratoria. El Sábado, para terminar la semana, El Centro Comunal Latino y El Departamento de Recursos de la Comunidad y la Familia de Bloomington(BCFR por sus siglas en Ingles) patrocinaron un Festival del Cinco de Mayo en el Parque de la 3ra, y muchos estudiantes Latino-Hispanos de IU celebraron su graduación en compañía de su familia y seres queridos. En cierta forma, estos eventos durante la semana reflejan los retos y contribuciones que la presencia Latino/Hispana representa para Bloomington y el Condado Monroe.

¿Quiénes son los Latinos/Hispanos locales? De acuerdo con el censo del 2000, había 2,530 hispanos en el Condado Monroe ocupando el 2.09% de la población. Muchos de nosotros que regularmente trabajamos con Latinos locales estimamos que la población actual podría ser cerca de 4,000. La población Latino/Hispana local incluye residentes ya de cierta antigüedad y los que recientemente han llegado a Bloomington. Nosotros somos de descendencia Europea, Africana, Asiática e Indígena. El resultado son Latinos/Hispanos "blancos", "negros", "cafés", y de cualquier color o aspecto dentro de eso. Somos miembros de alguna facultad, del personal, o del cuerpo estudiantil tanto de IU como Ivy Tech. Somos profesionales en la comunidad, y somos también trabajadores ya sea en restaurantes, hoteles y construcción. Somos 2da, 3ra, y 4ta generación de Latinos/Hispanos nacidos en Estados Unidos tan americano como nachos en el estadio de béisbol. Somos extranjeros naturalizados como ciudadanos americanos y residentes legales. Y si, algunos incluso cruzaron el río o el desierto en la oscuridad de la noche para llegar hasta aquí, y poder mejorar su destino, escapando usualmente de un horror indescriptible en casa.

Ve "Contribuciones," página 28

Recursos

Continua de página 26

Lleve una casa una caja de cereal GRATIS y además un libro para su hijo. Los lunes, de 10 a.m.-12 en el salón para familias de Shalom en la Primera Iglesia Cristiana, esquina de Kirkwood y la calle Washington.

Digalo en Español: ¡No deje que

su hijo se olvide de hablar el español! Conozca a otros padres deseosos de que sus hijos aprenden y hablen el español. Participe en esta sesión de juegos y canciones en español los jueves, 9:30-11:30 a.m. en el salón de exploración pre-escolar de la biblioteca pública.

Mercado Gratuito Familiar: Obtenga gratis: pañales, boletos para el bus, fruta,

vegetales, panes, postres y alimentos básicos todos los viernes, de 2:00-3:30 p.m. en la cafetería de la escuela Templeton. Toda familia puede participar.

Eventos para Diversión y Aprendizaje Familiar: Escribir y presentar un drama; hacer ejercicio con toda la familia; hacer ciencia; hacer arte y escritura creativa; escribir para publicarse en la Antología

Familiar de Templeton; y talleres para padres se ofrecen seguidos.

Las familias pueden visitar el Centro de Recursos Familiares en cualquier momento para buscar información, hacer preguntas, hacer conexiones con otros recursos para familias en la comunidad. 330-7735, ext. 50120 Se habla español.

Templeton

Continued from page 26

Mondays, 10 am-noon in the Shalom Resource

Center Family Room at First Christian Church, corner of Kirkwood and Washington Street.

Say it in Spanish: Learn Spanish with your pre-schooler through singing and games. Thursdays, 9:30-11:30 in the Monroe County Public Library Pre-school Exploration Room.

Free Family Market: Free diapers, bus tickets, fruits, vegetables, breads, desserts,

and basic food items. Every Friday, 2:00-3:30 p.m. in the Templeton Elementary school café. Open to all families.

Family Fun and Learning Events: Writing and presenting a play; family fitness; hands-on science fun; family art and creative writing; writing to be published

in the Templeton Family Anthology; and workshops for parents are offered regularly.

Families are welcome to drop in to find information and connections to community resources. 330-7735, ext. 50120

Corazon

Continua de página 26

Por ejemplo, el parar de fumar puede cortar su riesgo de enfermedad del corazón por la mitad. La tensión alta también contribuye al riesgo de enfermedad y se puede cambiar con un régimen más sano que reduce la cantidad de sodio y alcohol

que uno consume. El colesterol alto, el sobrepeso o la obesidad, y la falta de actividad física son otros factores controlables que contribuyen a la posibilidad de la enfermedad del corazón. Un sesenta por ciento de latinas no son físicamente activas, y son 1.3 veces más probables de ser obesas, lo cual contribuye a la

enfermedad y sirve como ejemplo de los riesgos que tiene los latinos específicamente.

Para reducir su riesgo de enfermedad del corazón, uno debe hablar con su médico para evaluar su nivel de riesgo. Mientras tanto, uno puede dejar de fumar, tener una dieta más sana, y hacer ejerci-

cio por treinta minutos al día aunque sea sólo caminar.

Este artículo está patrocinado por Bloomington Hospital Positive Link. Llame a Jessica al 353-3249 o manda un email a jwetmore@bloomingtonhospital.org si tiene preguntas.

Heart Disease

Continued from page 26

For example, quitting smoking cuts your risk of heart disease in half. High blood pressure also contributes to your risk of disease and you can change that by having a healthier

diet that reduces your intake of sodium and alcohol. High cholesterol, overweight or obesity, and a lack of physical activity are other controllable factors that contribute to a higher probability of heart disease. Sixty percent of Latinas are not physically active and they are 1.3 times more likely

to be obese, which also contributes greatly to the disease and is an example of the higher risks that Latinos specifically face.

To reduce your risk of heart disease, you need to consult your doctor to evaluate your risk level. Meanwhile, you can quit smoking, start a healthier diet, and exer-

cise for at least thirty minutes each day, even if it is only walking.

This article is sponsored by Bloomington Hospital Positive Link. Call Jessica at 353-3249 or email at jwetmore@bloomingtonhospital.org if you have questions.

Special Section: Voices Seldom Heard

Duck

When it comes to foul play
It may
Not always be fowl play
But be advised
It may not be wise
To get in this bird's way
Cause I might waddle
And my voice might quack
But know from the start
I got a stack
Of mechanisms
For self defense
So when ya talk to me
You best make sense
And if you're asking me out
You're going to need some luck
Cause honey when I start
Swingin'
Ya better duck.

Liquid Gray

Stainless steel is my friend
Metal bars don't pretend
Moments pass and fade away
Concrete walls hard as clay
So I breathe and take my time
The sun goes down upon my crime
Reasons to cry
Sorrows and pain
Healing is here pouring like rain

- Andy Staggs

Devils Track

If when covered
Red from flame
Devils track fast and hard to tame
Defeated mind cries
Spiritual reign
Devils track kills the soul to shame
My eyes, the worry
Stressful windows of hell
Within the ocean full of shells
A soul lies deep
In the midst it dwells
To escape the pains
Of one being in jail

- Andy Staggs

It's A Beautiful Morning

If you were given the chance
To wake up each day
To be a part of
A big old beautiful world

How would this affect you
What would you do

- Kay

Would you be thankful
For what has been given to you
Would you be happy
Would this satisfy you

Would you be grateful enough
To try your best
To give your world something back

Or—would you just keep on taking
Everything you could take—from your world
Or—would you just keep on doing
Whatever made you happy—at the moment...

- Bill Fox

Gratitude

Remembering the days of slides, Tonka Toys,
and swings
Those were the days full of beautiful things
Not a care in the world, not a burden on my
mind
No worries of my future, no idea of...re-wind

However, today, many damages have been
done
Now, I must make amends, stand up, move
forward with one...
Small step at a time, and each breath that I
take,
And remember yesterday, and that last, nearly
fatal mistake

To remember the sorrow, and the tears that
were shed
The price everyone paid, due to the life I chose
and led
God looked down from Heaven, saw the tears
when I cried...
"Dear God, please help me, I feel as my soul
has died"

Today I am happy, I'm relieved and I'm free
Because of this program, through LOVE that
was offered to me
I was given many tools, taught how to battle
everyday strife
Through God's love and this hope-filled AIR
Community Program

New Leaf New Life!

- Rodney Evans

The Street

I.
That one needs a
Place to stay,
That one needs some food
I can try to ease
Your mind, I'm always in this mood.

II.
Welcome to the street, my friend.
Where life's not always fair.
Your plight's just
Not important, confusion every
where.

III.
Death and loss lie waiting
To tell the worst of lies,
And measure just the right time
To put pennies on your eyes.

IV.
There's ways to save you
So say I. Don't heed
The evil's call,
The street will always
Be there, don't let it end the all.

- R.

While many Americans list salsa dancing and Mexican food as some of the gifts Hispanics/Latinos bring to the U.S., there is much more to Hispanic/Latino cultures than great music and burritos as big as your head. The gift that the Hispanic/Latino presence manifests can be found in our diversity of origins such as Cubans, Colombians, Costa Ricans, Guatemalans, Hondurans, Mexicans, Puerto Ricans, Peruvians, Brazilians and many others. With this diversity of origin comes a wealth of diversity in thought, music, art, and worldviews. In the midst of all the diversity however, is a common desire and dream to improve our lives, our families,

and our community. These values are reflected in a strong work ethic, an emphasis on family, and in sharing and celebrating as a community.

The soccer match was more than just a sporting event; it was a venue for national pride for many Mexican immigrants in attendance and an opportunity for many U.S. born Hispanics/Latinos and Latinos from other countries to celebrate our communal identity. Similarly, the Cinco de Mayo festival celebrated not only the Mexican holiday, but Hispanic/Latino Cultures. The festival also demonstrated the support of many local agencies such as Big Brothers Big Sisters, Middle Way

House, Monroe County Public Library, the Templeton-Shalom Family Resource Center, MCCSC Adult Education, Bloomington Hospital Positive Link, and many others.

The Hispanic/Latino presence also represents a challenge, as evidenced by the march for comprehensive immigration reform on May 1st. Nationally and locally there is an anti-immigrant and specifically anti Hispanic/Latino sentiment. Some of these sentiments are rooted in fear, some in ignorance and others in hate. All of which are understandable when considering what diversity can represent to individuals: increased ambiguity, lack

of understanding, miscommunication, a changing worldview. The first step in moving beyond this is understanding.

The local Hispanic/Latino presence challenges each of us to mutual openness, acceptance and personal and communal growth. At the core of the Hispanic/Latino community is the individual, with his or her own dreams and aspirations. If we take the time to dialogue with, and get to know one another at a personal level, we can discover not only our differences but the values that we share in common as members of one human family.

Mientras muchos Americanos mencionan el baile de la salsa y la comida Mexicana como algunas de las contribuciones que los Latinos/Hispanos traen a Estados Unidos, existe mucho mas dentro de la cultura Latino/Hispana aparte de gran música y burritos tan grandes como tu cabeza. La contribución que la presencia Latino/Hispana manifiesta puede ser vista en nuestra diversidad de orígenes tales como: Cubanos, Colombianos, Costarricenses, Guatemaltecos, Hondureños, Mexicanos, Puertorriqueños, Peruanos, Brasileños y muchos otros. Con esta diversidad de orígenes viene una riqueza de diversidad en pensamiento, música, arte y visión mundial. Pero en medio de toda la diversidad, es común el deseo y el

sueño de mejorar nuestras vidas, nuestras familias, y nuestra comunidad. Estos valores son reflejados en una fuerte ética de trabajo, un énfasis en la familia, y en compartir y celebrar como una comunidad.

El partido de fútbol fue mas que solo un evento deportivo; fue un lugar de orgullo nacional para muchos inmigrantes Mexicanos que asistieron, una oportunidad para muchos residentes americanos de origen Latino/Hispano y también para Latinos de otros países para celebrar nuestra Identidad comunal. De la misma forma, el festival de Cinco de Mayo celebró no solo un día festivo Mexicano, pero también para Culturas Latino/Hispanas. El festival también demostró el apoyo de

muchas agencias locales tales como Big Brothers Big Sisters, Middle Way House, Monroe County Public Library, el Centro de Recursos Familiares de Templeton-Shalom, MCCSC Adult Education, Bloomington Hospital Positive Link, y muchos otros.

La presencia Latino/Hispana tambien representa un reto, confirmado con la marcha por la reforma migratoria el primero de Mayo. Nacionalmente y localmente existe un sentimiento anti-inmigrante, específicamente un sentimiento anti-latino/Hispano. Algunos de estos sentimientos están basados en miedo, algunos en ignorancia y otros en odio. Cada uno de los cuales son entendibles si se considera lo que la diversidad puede significar para

las personas: incremento de ambigüedad, falta de entendimiento, mala comunicación, una visión mundial evolucionando. El primer paso para salir de esto es el entendimiento.

La presencia Latino/Hispana local llama a cada uno de nosotros a un acuerdo mutuo, aceptación y crecimiento tanto personal como comunal. En el núcleo del la comunidad Latino/Hispana esta el individuo, con sus propios sueños y aspiraciones. Si nos tomamos un tiempo para dialogar, y conocernos el uno al otro a un nivel personal, podremos descubrir no solo nuestras diferencias sino también los valores que tenemos en común como miembros de una familia humana.

Directory of agencies and services

This directory outlines several agencies and services available to residents of Monroe County. Additionally, many listings provide contact information for prospective volunteers. For more extensive articles about many of these agencies and services, see earlier issues of Safety-Net at www.shalomcommunitycenter.org. Several of the agencies and services described provide multiple forms of aid. Unless otherwise noted all services and agencies are located in Bloomington. Several of the agencies listed below send representatives to the Shalom Resource & Family Center in the basement of the First Christian Church at 205 E. Kirkwood Avenue at specific times during the week to meet with people. If you are interested in talking with someone from an agency, call the Shalom Center at 334-5728 and ask for the schedule.

Addiction Counseling Clothing, furniture, housewares

Amethyst House

Address: 645 N. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 336-3570

Web: www.amethysthouse.org

Volunteer Contact: Gina Lovell ([812] 336-3570 x10; amethyst@bloomington.in.us)

About: Provides structured living environments, treatment, and recovery services for individuals with addictions. Amethyst House operates three transitional living facilities: (1) a men's 1/2 way house, (2) a women's 1/2 way house that serves women and their dependent children up to 6 years old, and (3) a men's 3/4 way house. Amethyst house also operates an outpatient treatment facility in Bloomington as well as Evansville.

Center for Behavioral Health

Address: 645 S. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 339-1691

Web: www.the-center.org

About: Provides services for people with behavioral and mental health challenges, such as depression, stress, panic disorders, alcohol and chemical dependencies, phobias, child behavioral disorders, grief and loss, marital and family problems, and severe and persistent emotional disorders. Services provided include psychiatry, 24-hour emergency services, and vocational and residential services. CBH hours are Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Appointments must be made for services in the evening and weekend.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Address: Hours and locations vary.

Phone: (812) 334-8191

Web: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org

About: Provides support for those wanting to stop alcohol consumption.

AIDS/HIV Services

Bloomington Hospital Positive Link

Address: 333 E. Miller Dr.

Phone: (812) 353-9150

Web: www.bloomingtonhospital.org

About: Provides HIV testing and support services for infected individuals.

Monroe County United Ministries

Address: 827 W. 14 Ct.

Phone: (812) 339-3429

Volunteer Contact: Rebecca Gordan ([812] 353-9150; mcumhelp@bloomington.in.us)

About: Provides a subsidized Child-Care Program for low-income families in Monroe County, which includes a year-round program for children two to six years old, and a summer camp subsidized child-care for children ages six to ten, when school is out of session. All care-givers in the families either work full time or attend school part-time and work part-time. There is also an Emergency Services Program that assists families who are experiencing a short-term crisis. The Emergency Services Program includes a food pantry, a clothing program, and financial assistance for rent or utility payments.

My Sister's Closet of Monroe County, Inc.

Address: 1010 S. Walnut St.

Web: www.mysistersclosetofmonroeco.org

Volunteer Contact: JoAnne Bunnage ([812] 335-6603; jbunnage@indiana.edu)

About: Provides low-income women with free interview and workplace apparel, helping them overcome hurdles they face to independence and family self-sufficiency. Also sells used, affordable clothes to the public.

Salvation Army

Address: 111 N. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 336-4310

Web: www.amethysthouse.org

Volunteer Contact: Monica Clemons ([812] 336-4310 x10; monica_clemons@usc.salvationarmy.org)

About: Provides a variety of services, including: food pantry, food vouchers, seasonal assistance, clothing and clothing vouchers, 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 a thrift store. All services are without charge with the exception of Child Care Connection and thrift store.

St. Vincent de Paul Society

Address: 4607 West State Road 46

Phone: (812) 961-1510

Web: www.bloomingtonsvdp.org

Volunteer Contact: Scott Alber, ([812] 335-1280; volunteer@bloomingtonsvdp.org)

About: A Catholic led ecumenical society of volunteers dedicated to helping those in need. Assistance is offered in the form of community resource information, vouchers for furniture, and in some cases limited financial help with a utility bill, rent, rent deposit or other essential need. Almost all funding comes through donations and assistance is given without regard to religion, race or creed. Volunteer opportunities abound.

Disabilities assistance programs

Abilities Unlimited

Address: 2620 N. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 332-1620

Web: www.abilitiesunlimited.net

Volunteer Contact: Lynne Argent ([812] 332-1620; au@abilitiesunlimited.net)

About: Supplies free services to citizens with disabilities, including the elderly. Services include the temporary loan of durable medical equipment after an accident or illness, such as a wheelchair, walker, bath seat. Individuals who do not have insurance can borrow equipment for as long as they need it. Other services include the supply of Home Modifications for Accessible Living to low income City of Bloomington residents. This includes installation of wheelchair ramps, safety railings, and bathroom renovations. Also offers camp scholarships to young people with disabilities.

Citizen Advocacy of South Central Indiana, Inc.

Address: PO Box 1732

Volunteer Contact: Jo Gilbertson ([812] 219-5566; j.gilbertson@insightbb.com)

About: Facilitates the recognition, promotion and protection of the rights and interests of people with disabilities through Volunteer Advocates.

Mental Health America

Address: 120 W. 7th St., Ste. 104

Phone: (812) 339-1551

Web: www.monroementalhealth.org

Volunteer Contact: Donna Graves ([812] 339-1551 x12 or mha@bloomington.in.us)

About: The MHA mission is promoting awareness in the prevention of mental illness. The programs include an Ombudsman Program (assists people involved with mental health services with respect to arbitration and conflict resolution with those services), Jail Diversion (a support network for services to this sector of the community), and support groups that provide education and advocacy for families and friends of persons coping with specific types of mental illnesses.

Options for Better Living

Address: 200 E. Winslow Rd.

Phone: (812) 332-9615

Web: www.optionsfbl.com

Volunteer Contact: Melissa Copas, ([812] 332-9615 x218; mcopas@optionsfbl.com)

About: Works with people with disabilities to find a job that matches their skills, and then works one-on-one with the person and the employer to create barrier-free work environments.

People & Animal Learning Services (PALS)

Address: 680 W. That Rd.

Phone: (812) 336-2798

Web: www.palstherapy.org

Volunteer Contact: Jan Gavin ([812] 325-7863; jbgavin@indiana.edu)

About: Provides Equine Assisted Activities (EAA) such as therapeutic riding and hippotherapy to children and adults with disabilities and to at-risk youth from South Central Indiana. PALS is a NARHA Premier Accredited Center (www.narha.org) and a United Way of Monroe County Member Agency.

Stone Belt

Address: 2815 E. 10 St.

Phone: (812) 332-2168

Web: www.stonebelt.org

Volunteer Contact: Amy Jackson (332-2168 x314; ajackson@stonebelt.org)

About: A community-based organization with over 48 years of experience in serving persons with developmental disabilities. Supports include residential, employment, life skills training and psychological services. With locations in Monroe, Lawrence, Owen, Bartholomew and surrounding counties, Stone Belt's mission is to prepare, empower, and support persons with developmental disabilities and their families to participate fully in the life of the community.

Employment resources and job counseling

WorkOne

Address: 450 Landmark Ave.

Phone: (812) 331-6000

About: Assists individuals and businesses in meeting their employment and training needs. WorkOne provides employment services, job counseling and assessment services, training services through WIA, older worker services through Experience Works, vocational rehabilitation services through Indiana Vocational Rehabilitation, veteran services and unemployment insurance benefits.

Options for Better Living

See disabilities assistance programs.

Stone Belt

See disabilities assistance programs.

Job Links

About: An Area 10 Agency on Aging RSVP program that helps people write resumes, find employment, and prepare for job interviews. Job Links takes place at several locations, including the Shalom Community Center at 334-5728.

Family Services

Family Service Association

Address: One City Centre

Phone: (812) 339-1551

About: The FSA mission is strengthening the health quality of family life in its various styles and many relationships. The programs include Oak Tree Counseling (provides individual and family therapy), Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), who work with the Court to make recommendations for rehabilitative and protective services for children and families, and Families in Transition/Family Strengthening (provides parenting classes for both the community and for incarcerated parents.)

Family Resource Center at Templeton School

Address: 1400 Brenda Lane

Phone: (812) 330-7735 x 50117 and 50120

About: Provides pre-school play groups and story hours, a Free Family Market (a free food source) on Fridays, 2:00-3:30 p.m., and programming for families focused on literacy and family fun; information and referrals for the needs of children and families.

Head Start Program

Address: 1520 W. 15th St.

Phone: (812) 334-8350

Web: www.headstart.bloomington.in.us/

About: Guides children aged 3 to kindergarten towards gaining cognitive skills, patience, sharing, problem solving, hygiene, safety, and practice in good decision making. Free to income eligible.

Monroe County United Ministries

See clothing, furniture, housewares.

Office of Family and Children

Address: 401 E. Miller Drive

Phone: (812) 336-6351

About: Provides aid to families with dependent children (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, TANF), food stamps, Medicaid, and child welfare services.

WIC Program

Address: 333 East Miller Drive

Phone: (812) 353-3221

About: The WIC Program serves pregnant, breastfeeding and post partum women, infants and children up to 5 years of age. Applicants must meet income guidelines, live in Indiana, and have a nutritional need. The WIC Program provides checks for nutritious foods that are cashed at local grocery stores, nutrition education and breastfeeding support. All services are provided free of charge.

Food stamps

Office of Family and Children

See family services.

Health care

Futures Family Health Clinic

Address: 338 S. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 349-7343

About: provides family planning health services for adolescents, men, and women. Services are provided on a sliding fee schedule based on income. Services offered include annual exam and Pap smear, pregnancy testing, STD and HIV testing, birth control counseling, emergency contraception, health education, birth control pills, birth control shots, IUD (intrauterine device), and condoms.

Hospice of Bloomington Hospital

Address: 619 W 1st St.

Phone: (812) 353-9818

Web: www.bloomingtonhospital.org

Volunteer Contact: Melanie Miller ([812] 353-9818; mmiller@bloomhealth.org)

About: Provides care and support for people who are terminally ill and their families through direct patient care, assistance with errands and deliveries, household and clerical assistance, and fundraising. Training classes for new volunteers are offered twice a year.

Hoosier Healthwise for Children

Address: 401 Morton St., Suite 260 (City Hall)

Phone: (812) 349-3851

Web: www.hoosierhealthwise.net

About: A state sponsored health insurance

program for children, pregnant women, and low-income families. Applicants must meet eligibility criteria. Free or low cost, depending upon income.

Monroe County Public Health Clinic

Address: 333 East Miller Drive

Phone: (812) 353-3244

About: Services provided include immunizations, lead screening, hemoglobin testing, tuberculosis skin testing, and lice checks. Call for dates and to make appointments.

Planned Parenthood

Address: 421 S. College Ave.

Phone: (812) 336-0219

Web: www.ppin.org

About: Services provided include pelvic exams, breast exams, testing and treatment of sexually transmitted infections, HIV testing and counseling, pregnancy tests, various types of birth control, emergency contraception (the "morning after pill"), as well as abortion services.

Vistacare Hospice

Address: 1801 Liberty Dr., Ste. 103

Phone: (812) 330-9640

Web: www.vistacare.com

Volunteer Contact: Cathi Counterman ([812] 340-3467; cathi.counterman@vistacare.com)

About: Provides caregiver relief and companionship for terminally ill patients and bereavement support for family members.

Volunteers in Medicine Clinic

Address: 333 E. Miller Dr.

Phone: (812) 353-3533

Web: www.vimmonroecounty.org

Volunteer Contact: Loraine Addison ([812] 353-3533 x6; info@vimmonroecounty.org)

About: Provides free medical care, including dental care at the offices of participating dentists, for people living in Monroe or Owen County who lack health insurance and have an income at or below 200% of the federal poverty level. This means that the income must not exceed \$20,420 for a 1 person household. For each additional person, add \$6,960. To qualify for medical care individuals must fill out an eligibility form about their economic situation and set up an eligibility interview. Children or adults who qualify for health care at the clinic will receive free care at Southern Indiana Pediatrics.

Housing (abused women)

Middle Way House

Address: 404 W. Kirkwood Ave.

Phone: (812) 336-0846 (Middle Way)

(812) 337-4510 (The Rise)

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

Volunteer Contact: Colleen Yeakle ([812] 333-7404; mwhouse@bloomington.in.us)

About: Middle Way House is an emergency shelter that provides services to protect and help women who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, and women who feel they are in danger. Services include a safe place to stay, case management, in-house children's programs, legal advocacy. There is also a transitional housing program called The Rise which has self-contained apartments for families leaving abusive relationships. Women and their children can stay at The Rise for up to two years.

Housing (emergency, for adults)

Backstreet Missions

Address: 215 Westplex Ave.

Phone: (812) 333-1905

Web: www.backstreet.org

About: A men's shelter with services including a crisis and 12 month housing program, meals, the provision of clothing, ministry to spiritual needs, job and life skill training, GED classes, and employment and volunteer opportunities. There is also a Thrift Store.

Martha's House

Address: 1010 S. Walnut St. (office) 919 S. Rogers (Shelter)

Phone: (812) 335-6841 (812) 332-1444 (office)

Volunteer Contact: Bobbie Summers

About: An emergency shelter with 28 beds for homeless men and women. Services provided include case management, food, and clothing. Opens at 4:30 p.m.

Housing (Pregnant women)

Hannah House Maternity Home

Address: 808 N. College Ave.

Phone: (812) 334-2662

Web: www.cpcbloomington.org

About: A comprehensive residential program for pregnant women and teenagers. Offers access to prenatal and pediatric care. Also offers life skills training and assistance in achieving longer-term educational and career goals.

Housing (Rental)

Bloomington Housing Authority

Address: 1007 N. Summit St.

Phone: (812) 339-3491

About: Subsidized housing, Section 8, Public Housing. Cost varies to income eligible.

Housing and Neighborhood Development

Address: 401 N. Morton Street, Ste. 130
Phone: (812) 349-3420

Web: www.bloomington.in.gov/hand
About: Creates affordable housing opportunities in the City of Bloomington by working through its partnerships with local non-profit and for-profit developers and through its in-house housing programs. HAND provides housing counseling to individuals with housing needs or difficulties and provides a variety of learning opportunities for the community on housing related issues. In addition, HAND enforces the Property Maintenance Code and the City's weed and trash ordinances.

South Central Community Action Program, Inc.

Address: 1500 W. 15th St.

Phone: (812) 339-3447

Web: http://www.sccap.monroe.in.us/
Volunteer Contact: Beth Pankoski ([812] 339-3447 x233; beth@sccap.monroe.in.us)
About: State and federal anti-poverty programs for low income individuals and families. Weatherization Assistance, Energy Assistance, Owner Occupied Rehabilitation, Section 8 rent subsidy program.

Housing (homeless youth)

Stepping Stones

Address: PO Box 1366

Phone: (812) 339-9771

Web: www.stepsstones-inc.org

About: Transitional housing program and supportive service for homeless young people aged 16-20.

Youth Services Bureau

Address: 615 S. Adams St.

Phone: (812) 349-2506

Web: www.youthservicesbureau.net

Volunteer Contact: Ron Thompson ([812] 349-2588; rthompson@co.monroe.in.us)

About: Provides short term residential care and crisis intervention for youth ages 8-17. Provides other services as well.

Legal and court-related services

Community Justice & Mediation Center

Address: 120 W. 7th St., Ste. 310

Phone: (812) 339-1551

Web: www.bloomington.in.us/~mediate

Volunteer Contact: Amanda Nickey ([812] 336-8677; vorpcm@bloomington.in.us)

About: Programs include the Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program, Shoplifter's Alternative Program, Workshops, Trainings, and Community Mediation Services for neighborhood, school, family or business conflicts.

Legal Services Organization of Indiana, Inc. Bloomington

Address: 214 S. College Ave.

Phone: (812) 339-7668

About: Cannot help people in criminal cases. Helps people in civil cases, including: Housing (eviction, foreclosure, landlord/tenant); Public Benefits (food stamps, SSI, unemployment, poor relief, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF); Health (Medicaid, Medicare); Divorce or child custody where there is child abuse or spouse abuse; Child In Need of Services (CHINS); Consumer (collections and repossessions); Education (including expulsion and access to special education services and Vocational Rehabilitation); Access to Justice (e.g. denial of a court-appointed attorney in certain civil cases).

Monroe County Court Appointed Special Advocates

Address: 120 W. 7th St., Ste. 104

Phone: (812) 339-1551

Web: www.monroementalhealth.com/casa.asp

Volunteer Contact: Sandy Rampley ([812] 339-1551 x23; casakids@bloomington.in.us)

About: Provides direct advocacy for child victims of physical abuse, sexual abuse and neglect. Volunteer advocates represent children in the court process to protect the child's best interests.

Monroe County Prosecutor - Victim Assistance Program

Address: 301 N. College Ave., Rm. 211

Phone: (812) 349-2670

Web: www.co.monroe.in.us

Volunteer Contact: Sarah Lanman ([812] 349-2670; slanman@co.monroe.in.us)

About: Helps to ease the trauma victim's burden by explaining the criminal justice process, accompanying victims to court, updating them on current cases and obtaining restitution.

Meals and pantries (no cost)

Meals

Backstreet Missions (Gino's Cafeteria)

Monday-Friday: Lunch: 11-12 p.m.;

Dinner: 4-5 p.m.

Saturday: Breakfast 8-9:30 a.m.; Lunch

11-12 p.m.

Bloomington Meals on Wheels, Inc.

Address: 714 S. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 323-4982

Web: www.bloomington.in.us/~meals

About: Provides meals to homebound people who are unable to cook for themselves. No age or economic restrictions. To enroll, call number listed. A volunteer will arrange for meal delivery and special dietary needs, explain the costs and how payments can be made.

Community Kitchen

Address: 917 S. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 332-0999

Web: www.monroecommunitykitchen.com

Volunteer Contact: Annie Brookshire ([812] 332-0999; volunteer@monroecommunitykitchen.com)

Monday-Saturday: Dinner: 4-6 p.m.

About: Provides hot meals in a sit-down area as well as cold carry-out boxed meals after 5 p.m. Also provides meals for after-school programs at the Boys and Girls Club, The Rise, and Girls Inc.

Community Kitchen Express

Address: 100 W. 11th St.

Monday-Saturday: Dinner: 4-6 p.m.

About: Provides hot meals in a sit-down area as well as cold carry-out boxed meals after 5 p.m. Provides hot and cold meals as carry-out only. See Community Kitchen listing (above) for phone and volunteer information.

First Christian Church

Address: Corner of Kirkwood Ave. and Washington St.

Sunday: Breakfast: 8-9:30 a.m.

Harvest House Soup Kitchen

Address: 1107 S. Fairview Dr.

Phone: (812) 339-4462

Sunday: Lunch: 2-4 p.m.

Shalom Community Center

Address: 219 E. 4th St. (entrance off alley at back)

Phone: (812) 332-5728

Web: www.hoosier.net/~shalom

Volunteer Contact: Pam Kinnaman ([812] 334-5734; pkshalom@ix.netcom.com)

Monday-Friday: Breakfast: 8-9:30 a.m.; Lunch: 12-1:30 p.m. (except Wednesday lunch, 12-1 p.m.)

About: A daytime resource center for those experiencing homelessness and poverty. The FUMC facility is open all day and functions as a Day Shelter for guests, where they can use restroom facilities, make phone calls, and do their laundry. Shalom's Hospitality Center is located in the First Christian Church. Guests can go there to see case workers, employment counselors, connect with visiting agencies, seek assistance through the Family Homelessness Prevention Project, store belongings, receive mail, use restroom facilities, and take a hot shower.

Pantries/Groceries

Backstreet Missions Thrift Store

Address: 1928 Arlington Rd.

Phone: (812) 333-1501

Hours: Tuesday-Friday, 10 a.m.-noon.

About: Offers patrons one week's worth of food once a month.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank

Address: 615 N. Fairview St.

Phone: (812) 334-8374

Web: www.hhfoodbank.org

Volunteer Contact: Stephanie Solomon

(334-8374; volunteer@hhfoodbank.org)

About: Collects, stores and distributes donated food to 84 nonprofit organizations with feeding programs that directly serve needy and hungry people. Distributes about 2 million pounds of food to hungry people each year.

MCUM Emergency Pantry

Address: 827 W. 14th St.

Phone: (812) 339-3429

Hours: Monday-Friday 8-11:30 a.m.; 1-3:30 p.m.

About: Canned goods only. One week's worth provided. Must be Monroe County resident. Must present photo ID, SS#, last 30 days income.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard

Address: 1010 S. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 355-6843

Web: www.mhcfoodpantry.org

Hours: Monday-Friday 4-6 p.m.

About: Provides nutritious food to people in need. Most of the food is received from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. Also operates a Nutrition Education Program and an organic Community Gardening Program.

Salvation Army

Address: 111 N. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 336-4310

Hours: Monday-Thursday, 9 a.m.-noon; 1 p.m.-4 p.m.

About: Need ID. Depending upon income and resources, can offer one week's supply of groceries. Will not provide again for at least 30 days.

Shalom Community Center, First United Methodist Church

Address: 219 E.4th St.

Phone: (812) 334-5728

Hours: Wednesdays, 3:30-5:30 p.m.

About: Provides brown bag lunch, groceries.

Township Trustees Food Pantries Bloomington

Address: 2111 W. Vernal Pike

Phone: (812) 336-4976

Hours: Monday-Friday 8 a.m.-4 p.m.

About: Provides canned goods. Must be a resident of Bloomington Township.

Perry

Address: 1010 S. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 336-3713

Hours: Monday-Friday 9 a.m.-3 p.m.

About: Provides canned goods. Must be a resident of Perry Township.

Medicaid

Office of Family and Children

About: Medicaid is a federal and state funded medical assistance program that pays for approved and needed medical care for persons who meet eligibility requirements. For more information on the Office of Family and Children see the family services listing.

Older citizen programs

Area 10 Agency on Aging

Address: 630 W. Edgewood Drive
Ellettsville, Indiana 47429

Phone: (812) 876-3383

Web: www.bloomington.in.us/~area10

About: Offers programs and services, as well as being a resource of information about services for older and disabled citizens living in Monroe and Owen Counties. Services that can be accessed include in-home health-related services, home-delivered and congregate meal sites for the elderly, support groups, affordable housing, assistance for the homebound, handyman services, a long-term-care ombudsman program for residents of area nursing homes, a Retired and Senior Volunteer Program, an Older Workers Program for those 55 and older seeking employment, recreational and arts programs at Area 10's Endwright Center in Ellettsville, and also manages the Rural Transit bus service.

Pregnancy testing, counseling, education

Crisis Pregnancy Center

Address: 810 N. College Ave.

Phone: (812) 334-0104

Web: www.cpcbloomington.org

About: Free programs and services provided include: pregnancy testing and counseling, material support, childbirth and parenting education. Also operates Hannah House, a residential program for pregnant women and teenagers.

Planned Parenthood

See health care.

WIC Program

See family services.

Rent, utility, bill assistance

First call the Township Trustee in the Monroe County Township in which you live: Bean Blossom (876-5109), Benton (332-6081), Bloomington (336-4976), Clear Creek (824-7225), Indian Creek (824-4981), Perry (336-3713) Polk (837-9446), Richland (876-2509), Salt Creek (332-9777), Van Buren (825-4490), Washington (331-0809).

Youth programs

Big Brothers Big Sisters

Address: 418 S. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 334-2828

Web: www.bigsindiana.org

Volunteer Contact: Andrea Smith ([812] 334-2828; amsmith@bigsindiana.org)

About: Serves the emotional and social needs of 6 to 17-year-olds by facilitating professionally supported relationships with adult volunteers. Programs also exist where children are visited in school or at a partner site by adults or high school students. Volunteers mentor, bring support, and engage in fun activities with the children with whom they are matched.

Bloomington Boys and Girls Club

Address: 311 S. Lincoln St.

Phone: (812) 332-5311

Web: www.bgcbloomington.org

Volunteer Contact: Donnie Morgan ([812] 332-5311; domorgan@indiana.edu)

About: A guidance organization which fosters the physical, intellectual and social growth of boys and girls ages 6-18 with a special concern for those most in need of service.

Girls, Inc.

Address: 1108 W. 8th St.

Phone: (812) 336-7313

Web: www.girlsinc-monroe.org

Volunteer Contact: Nathan Rumble ([812] 336-7313; nrumple.monroe@girls-inc.org)

About: Provides after-school, summer and holiday programming for girls ages 6 to 18, inspiring them to be strong, smart and bold. Services include transportation, organized sports, a teen room, technology, self-defense and homework help.

Harmony School

Address: 909 E. 2nd St.

Phone: (812) 334-8349

Web: www.harmonyschool.org

Volunteer Contact: Libby Gwynn ([812] 334-8349; libby@harmonyschool.org)

About: An independent pre-Kindergarten through 12th grade school providing education to youth ages 3 to 18 from a wide range of economic and educational backgrounds.

Rhino's Youth Center

Address: 331 S. Walnut St.

Phone: (812) 333-3430

Web: www.rhinosyouthcenter.org

Volunteer Contact: Brad Wilhelm ([812] 333-3430; rhinosdirector@ameritech.net)

About: Provides entertainment as well as other programs for the youth of our community in an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment. In addition to music and shows, provides programs in partnership with the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department through the week after school. Several creative and practical classes and workshops, as well as mentoring, tutoring, counseling, and more, are available.

Youth Services Bureau

Address: 615 S. Adams St.

Phone: (812) 349-2506

Web: www.youthservicesbureau.net

Volunteer Contact: Ron Thompson ([812] 349-2588; rthompson@co.monroe.in.us)

About: Alongside youth shelter (see housing [youth]), provides counseling, education, supervised recreation, and transportation to and from school, as well as referrals to a variety of agencies for other needed services. The Youth Outreach Program, in collaboration with MCCSC, works with suspended and expelled middle school youth, and provides these students with intensive, one-on-one teaching to help them keep up with their education while they are out of school.

Additional services

Catholic Charities-Bloomington

Address: 631 North College Avenue

Phone: (812) 332-1261

Web: www.CatholicCharitiesBtown.org

About: Provides education, social service delivery, and advocacy. Takes special interest in poor, disabled, and otherwise disadvantaged persons. Serves residences of Brown, Lawrence, Morgan, Monroe, Orange and Owen counties, especially through mental health services. Provides individual, family, couples and group counseling to the English and Spanish-speaking clients.

Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County

Address: 213 E. Kirkwood Avenue

Phone: (812) 331-4069

Web: www.monroecountyhabitat.org

About: Habitat for Humanity helps families and volunteers to build homes for those living in inadequate housing. The homes are for families who have an income but do not have the funds to secure a bank loan. The money to build the homes comes from contributions from local churches, citizens, businesses, and other sponsors. Families pay back a zero interest mortgage over 15-25 years. That money goes into a fund which helps to pay for more houses.

Monroe County Safe Kids Chapter

Phone: (812) 353-5437

About: Certified Child Passenger Safety technicians will help you install your child's car seat and answer questions regarding general vehicle safety. If you need financial help with the purchase of a seat, let us know. All services are by appointment only.

Midwest Pages to Prisoners Project

Address: 310A S. Washington St.

Phone: (812) 339-8710

Web: www.pagestoprisoners.org

Volunteer Contact: Tess Hannah (339-8710; midwestpagestoprisoners@yahoo.com)

About: Provides free reading material to inmates upon request. Encourages self-education among prisoners in the United States.

Monroe County Public Library

Address: 303 E. Kirkwood Ave.

Phone: (812) 349-3050

Web: www.mcpl.info

About: Offers books, magazines, audio-visual materials, Internet computers, and free programs for all ages. It serves the county through facilities in Bloomington and Ellettsville, the Bookmobile (with over 25 stops weekly), and the Outreach Van. Library cards are available at no charge to all county residents. The VITAL literacy program offers one-on-one confidential tutoring to adult learners and ESL classes. During the school year the Main Library offers homework help to elementary students and math homework help to teens. During tax season volunteers offer tax help. The library also offers public meeting rooms to nonprofit groups. Anyone in the community may produce a program through CATS for the Public Access Channel

Monroe County Wrap-Around

Address: 645 S. Rogers St.

Phone: (812) 337-2225

About: Monroe County Wrap-Around is a multi-agency committee that provides needed services to families with children. For example, a case is brought to a particular agency, then a representative from that agency can present the case to Wrap-Around and all participating Wrap-Around agencies can play a role in coordinating help to the family in the most effective way. The planning process is done with the families "in the driver's seat". Each family identifies a "team" that works with them, and the team develops a plan based upon the strengths and needs of the specific family. Representatives from families also serve on committees that examine the policies and goals of Wrap-Around. This summer, the Lost Child Fund, which operates within Wrap-Around, is accepting funds to send children of working single parents to camp.

New Leaf - New Life, Inc.

Address: PO Box 7071

Phone: (812) 857-4999

Web: www.newleaf-cej.org

Volunteer Contact: Tania Karnofsky ([812] 857-4999; tania@newleaf-cej.org)

About: Coordinates volunteers who serve as "navigators" for inmates and those released from jail to find sources of support for re-entry into the community.