



Safety~Net

November 2009

This issue: The audacity to act

Safety-Net is a quarterly multi-agency newspaper sponsored by the South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP) that addresses issues confronted by those in our community experiencing difficulties related to poverty, lack of or potential loss of housing, under-employment or lack of employment, inadequate health care, as well as other needs that can be addressed by a caring community. The goal of the newspaper is to foster a positive interaction within our community between people that have resources that they can share with those who have fewer resources and want to cross the bridge to a better life. Such positive interactions already exist in our community, and one of the goals of this publication is to increase awareness of what is being done, and what must be done, and also to foster more caring interactions between our community members.

Readers will learn what SCCAP and the other local social service/non-profit agencies, the city of Bloomington and Monroe County governments do to help those in need, and how you can volunteer to help.

Each issue has Focus Articles as well as Special Sections. The Focus Articles in this issue are concerned with poverty and homelessness in our community. The Special Sections in this issue are: Agency Reports, Youth Programs, Therapeutic Jail and Re-Entry Programs, Volunteer Opportunities, Voices Seldom Heard, and a complete Agency Guide. Comments from readers are most welcome. Please address them to white@indiana.edu as well as doug@sccap.monroe.in.us. Place Safety-Net on the subject line, and state whether you would like your comments printed in the next issue.

Homelessness and hunger: a community concern

By Mark Kruzan, Mayor of Bloomington

A fundamental question for a community is how we are taking care of the people at the bottom of the economic scale.

In Bloomington, we often like to think of ourselves as insulated from many of the challenges faced by the most economically vulnerable. We often overlook the realities and the needs of those of meager means. Many in our community suffer the most when the economy suffers. These individuals and their families are impacted daily by poverty, hunger, and homelessness. Our awareness, or lack thereof, does not alter their need.

It is the responsibility of our entire community—the public and private sectors, community leaders and everyday citizens, city government and local nonprofit organizations and private businesses – to work collaboratively to provide a safety net to care for the most needy in our community. The City of Bloomington is very

involved in providing resources directly to address the problems of homelessness and hunger as well collaborating with other organizations and agencies to prevent and minimize its occurrence in Bloomington. Both the Community and Family Resources Department (CFRD) and the Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND) play an integral role in pooling City resources for the implementation of initiatives aimed at providing assistance and guidance to help families regain their footing.

Just last month, the City formalized an agreement with a community organization to donate use of one of its downtown facilities as an overnight shelter from November through March, ensuring that all individuals in Bloomington will have a place to sleep during the cold winter months. This partnership is precisely the sort of community collaboration that needs to happen if we are to solve some of

these difficult challenges facing Bloomington.

The City also provides direct funding to agencies that offer important emergency services through the Jack Hopkins Social Service Fund and the Community Development Block Grant which are administered by HAND. In fact, the Hopkins fund is being increased to \$200,000 in funding for next year, and increase that was made a priority in a tight budget year. Direct financial assistance outside of these ongoing programs has also been made to assist community agencies address homelessness. Efforts such as the assistance provided through a grant to the United Way last year to assist with homeless services as well supporting the current interfaith effort to offer shelter during the winter months are examples of this.

See "Mayor," page three



Editorial cartoon by Joe Lee.

Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in Bloomington

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

Each year, one week before Thanksgiving, the National Coalition for the Homeless and the National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness co-sponsor National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. During this week, a number of schools, communities and cities take part in a nationwide effort to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness. This year National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week is Sunday, November 15th – Saturday, November 21st, 2009.

For the second year in a row Shalom Community Center, Martha's House, Stepping Stones, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and IU INPIRG are collaborating to bring a week of events to Bloomington, IN, focusing the community's attention on issues of hunger and homelessness. The educational and fundraising events invite Bloomington residents to "see more, learn more, and do more", while showing the need in our community and the work agencies perform everyday to help people transition out of poverty.

The events of the week will highlight the unending need for the community to support these agencies in their tireless work and will culminate with a Bloomington special episode of "Are They Smarter Than a 5th Grader?" event on Thursday, November 19, 2009, featuring Pam Thrash (B97), Dr. Malone (Southern Indiana Pediatrics), and Myles Robinson (an Acacia Fraternity member) and three people TBD selected by MCCSC will take on the 5th graders.

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Awareness

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Darryl Neher will be the Emcee

host for the evening. Tickets on sale at Sun Rise Box Office, Bloomingfoods, Martha's House, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and Shalom: \$10 and kids 5 and under are free. This event is a benefit for Shalom Community Center, Martha's House, Stepping Stones and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Sponsored by: Cassady Electrical Contractors. For more information about the week visit <http://hhaw.tumblr.com/> or see the events list below.

Schedule of Events:

City of Bloomington Issues Proclamation on Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week - Saturday, November 14th 11am, Showers Atrium.

The Mayor's Proclamation declaring that Sunday, November 15th – Saturday, November 21st is Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week in Bloomington, IN. This is the kick-off event for the week of activities. Open to the public.

"Show and Tell: Stories of Poverty" - Monday, November 16th Rachael's Café, 7 p.m.

A collection of monologues performed by IU students taking a public speaking course focused on issues of hunger and homelessness. Free.

Are They Smarter Than A Fifth Grader? Thursday, November 19th, doors open at 6:30pm, and show starts at 7:00pm, Bloomington High School South

The culminating event for Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week is an evening with fifth graders and local celebrities in a Bloomington exclusive "Are They Smarter Than a Fifth Grader?" episode. Food Drives and Essay Contests were held at participating schools to determine student contenders. Pam Thrash (B97), Dr. Malone (Southern Indiana Pediatrics), and Myles Robinson (an Acacia Fraternity member) and three people TBD selected by MCCSC will take on the 5th graders. Darryl Neher will be the Emcee host for the evening. Tickets on sale at Sun Rise Box Office, Bloomingfoods, Martha's House, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard and Shalom: \$10

and kids 5 and under are free. This event is a benefit for Shalom Community Center, Martha's House, Stepping Stones and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Sponsored by: Cassady Electrical Contractors

Film Screening - "Kicking It" - Saturday, November 21st 7:30 p.m., IU Fine Arts Theater

The lives of homeless people are changed forever through an international soccer competition. This film follows six players as they set off for Cape Town, South Africa to play in the Homeless World Cup. \$5 at the door. Offered through Ryder Film Series.

All Week Long:

"What Home Means to Me" Photo Project - Saturday, November 14th-Saturday, November 21st - Showers Atrium

Clients of Shalom Community Center, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, Stepping Stones, and Martha's House were recruited to take pictures to represent "What Home Means to Me". These photos with a brief summary describing the meaning behind the photograph will be displayed in the Showers Plaza atrium. Some may appear in The Herald Times Online as well.

Spare Change for Social Change - Sunday, November 15th-Saturday November 21st

The Bloomington community is invited to support our efforts by donating spare change to the many collection cans around town during Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. Look for the Awareness Week logo on cans in your local businesses. All funds will be donated to Shalom, Martha's House, Stepping Stones and Mother Hubbard's Cupboard.

IU Student Food Stamp Challenge - Sunday, November 15th- Saturday November 21st

On IU campus the Indiana Public Interest Research Group (INPIRG) is organizing 5 students to take part in the Food Stamp Challenge. Participants may spend only \$21 on food and beverages for the week. \$21 is the average food stamp allotment per week for an



individual in the United States. The challenge is to "live the life" of a food stamp participant which will offer valuable insight into the struggles of people in poverty while helping the community and campus gain a better understanding of these issues.

Additional Agency Events:

Playing for Change – A CD Release Party with Shalom Community Center - Saturday, November 14th, 8pm, Players Pub

Shalom will host the launch of "Playing for Change," a CD featuring the music of Kent Johnson, accompanied by more than a dozen other artists (including Sylvia McNair). Kent and several of the featured musicians will perform live and CDs will be available for sale. Tickets

are \$5 at the door or at Sunrise Box Office. CDs are \$20. This is a benefit for Shalom Community Center

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard: "Share the Harvest" Auction and Gala - Saturday, November 14th, 6:30-9:30pm, KRC Catering Hall

Join Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC) for an evening of spirited fun and generous giving. Exciting live and silent auction marketplaces, delicious food and great music! Enjoy the performance by The Postmodern Jazz Quartet. \$25 tickets available at Relish, Sun Rise Box Office, Bloomingfoods and MHC. This is a benefit for Mother Hubbard's Cupboard. Sponsored by Restaurant Tallent, Finches, Trojan Horse, Limestone Grille and Feast.

About Safety-Net

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FOCUS ARTICLES

Each issue of Safety-Net has articles focused on a particular topic that affects those in need in our community. This issue has focus articles about hunger and homelessness.

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

The special sections in this issue are: Therapeutic Jail and Re-entry Programs, Voices Seldom Heard, Agency Reports, Volunteer Opportunities, Youth Programs, Agency Guide.

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.

Homeward Bound 5k: "Walk a Day, Change a Life"

By Ann Ruggiero and Danielle Rindler, Homeward Bound Walk Representatives

The City of Bloomington and 12 local agencies will host the 8th annual Bloomington Homeward Bound Walk on April 18, 2010 from 12 to 3 p.m. beginning at the Third Street Park. The Bloomington Homeward Bound Walk is a community event that benefits 12 local, non-profit agencies, all of which serve those suffering from homelessness and poverty in Monroe County. All funds raised through the Walk stay local.

The Homeward Bound Walks are a statewide effort, with Walks taking place in 11 different locations across Indiana throughout the year.

This year's campaign, "Walk a Day, Change a Life" aims to educate the community about homelessness in Monroe County, as well as how significantly a small amount of time or money can impact the lives of those served by the participating agencies. Even though the walk takes place in April, homelessness is prevalent all year long.

From 2003 to 2009, the Bloomington Homeward Bound Walk has raised more than \$385,000. All of the funds stay local. Funds from the walk benefit local agencies including Amethyst House, Area 10 on Aging, Centerstone, Community Kitchen, Hoosier Hills Food Bank, Martha's House, Middle Way House, Monroe County United Ministries, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, Shalom Community Center, Stepping Stones and the Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County. All of these agencies work daily to ensure that all Bloomington-area residents have food, shelter, and the services that they need to battle homelessness and the consequences of poverty. See the article Agencies that will receive funds from the Homeward Bound Walk.

Support for the Walk comes from community partners such as Indiana University, Ivy Tech, and corporate sponsorships from area businesses and community groups. Students from IU and Ivy Tech fill roles on the Homeward Bound Walk Steering Committee. We also appreciate

support from the many volunteers on the day of the Walk.

Last year's Walk took place on a cold, rainy, Sunday afternoon in April, but that did not dampen the spirits of the more than 500 walkers and 100 volunteers who turned out at Third Street Park. Together, they raised more than \$59,000.

Walkers enjoyed chili from the Lion's club, live music, African dance and drums, and the company of friends and neighbors.

In addition to the Walk, there were activities for children at Third Street Park's Kid's Island, which was sponsored by Indiana University's School of Education and the GROW program.

Live music and more

This year's route takes walkers through Downtown Bloomington, the Indiana University campus, and surrounding neighborhoods.

Also, live music from local artists will fill the air. Last year, IU's own Ladies First and Bated Breath took the main stage, while a half dozen other local artists entertained walkers along the route.

How to participate

Those interested in participating will have numerous opportunities to do so. This includes not only walking, but also fundraising, sponsorship, and donation opportunities for both individuals and corporations.

Volunteers are also needed for the day of the event to help with activities in the park, and to direct walkers along the route. If you are interested in changing the lives of those in your community, participating in the Homeward Bound Walk is a great way to get started.

The Walk is a community-run event where neighbors help neighbors. For more information, contact Kathy Mayer at (812) 349-3430 or visit www.homewardbound-indiana.org.

collaboration, spearheaded through City departments and driven by City staff, are in line with the mission of the City and its goal to provide for the most vulnerable.

Both through our programs and our financial support, the City continues to find new ways to promote awareness for these challenges and enfranchise residents. Community groups and the private sector work closely with us. Across departments, our staff continues its work with leaders in the community to build partnerships that effectively meet these challenges as well as get public input through such means as the recent town hall meeting the Community and Family Resources Commission sponsored. We have sought to find/build new synergies through which we carry out our mission of making the quality of life in Bloomington something we can all share regardless of economic circumstance.



A little rain didn't wash away the smiles at the 2009 Bloomington Homeward Bound Walk.

Agencies that will receive funds from the Homeward Bound Walk

Amethyst House provides high quality, structured living environments, treatment, and recovery services to individuals with addictions. They operate three transitional housing facilities in Bloomington: a 19 bed men's half-way house, an 11 bed women's half-way house that also serves dependent children up to age 6, and a 5 bed men's three-quarter-way house. Approximately 90% of their clients are homeless. In addition to their transitional housing program, Amethyst offers a full-range of outpatient treatment services in Bloomington and Evansville including assessment, case management, individual therapy, family therapy, group therapy, men's and women's groups, recovery education groups, health & nutrition education, employment readiness, relapse prevention, spirituality in recovery, leisure activity information, referrals, and other pertinent programming.

Area 10 Agency on Aging offers a variety of programs for the low-income frail, elderly, and disabled in Monroe and Owen Counties. They offer the Senior Nutrition Program which has five meal sites and offers home delivery of meals for the homebound. They also in-home services, such as health services, minor home repairs, telephone reassurance, friendly visitors, and shopping assistance including prescription pick-up. Area 10 also has employment services and on-the-job training for those aged 55 and older. Area

10's Endwright Center seeks to facilitate physical activities to promote personal health and social relationships. Area 10 Agency on Aging manages the Rural Transit bus service serving all ages in Monroe, Owen and Lawrence counties with specialized transportation for the physically handicapped. Their case management and information and referral services help assure that seniors are aware of all services and benefits for which they might be eligible.

Centerstone provides community-based behavioral healthcare, offering a full range of mental health services, substance abuse treatment and related educational services. Centerstone offers programs that serve homeless persons who struggle with mental health issues. These programs include the PATH homeless outreach program, 10-bed Transitional Care Facility for respite care/crisis stabilization, 14-bed Recovery House residence for those in drug & alcohol recovery, 10-bed Hoosier House Transitional housing, 12-unit Grant Street Single Room Occupancy housing, and 43 units of scattered site transitional and permanent supportive housing. Homeless persons have access to Centerstone's services including intensive case management, psychiatric care, employment assistance, and residential programs.

See "Agencies", page four

Mayor

Continued from page one

The Volunteers In Medicine program

offers funding and technical assistance in providing no or low cost medical care to working, low income residents, and the City is proud to have played a role in funding this important venture. Difficulty in paying for healthcare is a leading cause of bankruptcy and homelessness in our society. The work of VIM is a great example of how a community can work together to address a major social problem at the local level.

Educating families on alternatives to foreclosures, the Tenant-Based Rental Assistance Program, the Homeward Bound Walk and other such services and programs bring community organizations together with the City to offer guidance and support to those in need in Bloomington. These further examples of

No place like home: Affordable housing and shelters

By Sharon Lucas, Community and Family Resource Commission

Community and Family Resource Commission hosted its first Town Hall meeting on Oct 20th. The commission's goals are to gather information from the community as to their experience with housing and shelters in this area in order to lead to thoughtful solutions and guidance for public policy recommendations in meeting affordable housing demands.

The CFR Commission invited members

of the Bloomington business community, social service agencies, neighborhood associations, nonprofit shelter organizations and rental property owners to form a well-rounded discussion about Bloomington's affordable housing stack and the need for emergency shelter options.

The Town Hall meeting goal was to address three questions:

1. What have you experienced in find and living in affordable housing in Bloomington?

2. What is your understanding of/or experience with emergency shelters in the Bloomington community?

3. How would you advise the Community and Family Resources Commission and the City of Bloomington administra-

tion in seeking solutions for gaps in affordable housing or emergency shelter?

Notes from this town hall meeting will be used by the CFR Commissioners for future town hall meetings. It is their hope to draw attention to this topic and garnish support to address the needs of this community. Further information about upcoming events and updates can be found at <http://Bloomington.in.gov/board/cfr>.

The Interfaith Winter Shelter for the homeless

By Rev. Helen Enari, First Christian Church and Rev. Virginia B. Hall, Trinity Episcopal Church

The Interfaith Winter Shelter (IWS) will provide low barrier emergency shelter for Bloomington's homeless population during winter evenings from November through March. Initiated in 2009, a coalition of faith communities came together out of concern for the health, safety, and well-being of men and women who are homeless.

IWS will operate as a "rotating site." Three congregations will provide two to

three nights of shelter, and many other congregations—as well as the community-at-large—will provide volunteers, supplies, and financial resources.

IWS is unique in a number of ways:

* Its sole objective is to provide a safe, warm shelter from the cold.

* It was initiated as an interfaith effort and is supported by the wider community. This is the first time in the recent history of this city that a large and diverse inter-

faith group has come together to for such an undertaking.

* It seeks to serve persons who are NOT served by other agencies

* It is a low barrier shelter that does not require a breath test, a commitment to a specific program of recovery, or any religious commitment.

* The only standards required are respectful behavior, and no drugs, alcohol, or weapons on the premises.

The shelter will be open from 9 p.m. to 7 a.m. Each site will provide cots or mats, blankets and pillows for up to 35 people. Light snacks (e.g. granola bars) will be served (but not full meals because we do not wish to duplicate existing services offered by other agencies in the community.)

See "Shelter," page eight

Agencies

Continued from page three

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County's mission

is "to work, alone and in collaboration with others, to eliminate hunger in Monroe County and surrounding areas, through direct service, education and advocacy." Community Kitchen provides nutritious meals, nutrition education, referrals to other agencies, and a clean, comfortable social environment for patrons, staff and volunteers. They offer a "free" meal each day, Monday through Saturday, from 4 PM to 6 PM to anyone, no questions asked. They also distribute lunches daily to several after-school programs serving low income youth. During the summer they deliver breakfasts to children in low-income housing areas in Bloomington. The Community Kitchen also works to educate the public about the extent of hunger in Monroe County. The agency's ultimate goal is for individuals to achieve regular access to an adequate diet through normal means. A soup kitchen is not considered "normal" means, but rather a "safety net" for people who have not yet achieved food security on their own.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank (HHFB) collects, stores, and distributes nutritious food products to non-profit organizations, which provide free feeding programs that serve both ill and needy families and individuals in Monroe, Martin, Owen, Orange, Brown, and Lawrence Counties in Central Indiana. Since opening in 1982, over 22 million pounds of food have been distributed and since 1995, the Meal Share Program has distributed over 390,000 healthy meals to members of the community. HHFB picks up donated food, groceries, and prepared food on a daily basis and brings it back to their warehouse. Donations come from retailers, wholesalers, manufacturers, individuals and group food drives. Each week, a small staff and many generous volunteers are able to make over 30,000 pounds of food available to over 100 non-profit feeding organizations. These agencies collectively feed more than 25,000 individuals each year.

Martha's House is a 28-bed homeless shelter located in Bloomington. They provide a safe, overnight shelter with the necessary professional social services to help men and women obtain self-sufficiency. In addition to the case management services that are provided, Martha's House residents receive help to find employment and develop necessary life skills (such as personal hygiene). Clients also receive assistance with opening a bank account, accessing community services, learning the bus system, and acquiring affordable housing.

Middle Way House envisions a community where individuals live free from violence and the threat of violence; a community characterized by equality between women and men and social and economic justice; a community where everyone's contribution is honored and individual and group differences are valued; a community where everyone is adequately fed, housed, educated and employed; a community that provides opportunities for meaningful participation, personal growth, and creative expression. Middle Way offers many award winning programs and services to women and children, who are victims of domestic violence and sexual assault. These programs include crisis intervention, emergency and transitional housing, support services, legal advocacy, child care, economic development activities, and community outreach. Middle Way House advocates for the transformation of social structures that lead to disempowerment.

Monroe County United Ministries, Inc. (MCUM) offers assistance to low-income working families in Monroe County. MCUM operates a full day, year-round subsidized childcare program for children ages 2 – 6 and emergency services. Through their Emergency Services program, MCUM distributes a three day supply of food from their food pantry to needy families to help them through short term crises. They are also able to provide assistance with clothing and household items through a partnership with Opportunity House, a local

resale shop. In addition to these services, MCUM fights homelessness in particular by providing rent and utility assistance to those in need, to help keep them from being evicted or having their utilities disconnected. By helping families with low-cost high quality childcare and emergency services, MCUM strives to eliminate the effects of poverty.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC) is a Bloomington community food pantry offering wholesome, healthy groceries to people in need, as well as gardening and nutrition education. MHC provides services in ways that build community while enhancing the dignity, respect, and care of all involved. Over the past eleven years, MHC has distributed over 4 million pounds of rescued food to people in need and have provided over 420,000 client services. MHC currently serves an average of 1,878 clients each week. Patrons enjoy free choice of food items, one visit per week without a cut-off period, one grocery bag per person in the household to fill, a simple sign-in process that requires no justification of need, and the chance to volunteer and help run the pantry they use. Over 85% of our volunteers are also patrons, indicating their desire to "give back" to an organization that has helped them.

Shalom Community Center is dedicated to relieving the plight of people experiencing homelessness and poverty in South Central Indiana. Shalom offers a hunger relief program that offers cold breakfast and hot lunch daily, as well groceries from the Templeton-Shalom Family Market. They strive to meet basic needs at their day shelter, such as the availability of telephones, laundry, showers, and personal storage. They also provide assistance to families suffering from homelessness by providing a family center, diapers and formula, and utility assistance. In partnership with local organizations, Shalom links its clients directly with local social services for self-sufficiency such as the Job Links Program, City of Bloomington-HAND, Head Start, Ivy Tech, Centerstone's PATH, and more.

Stepping Stones, Inc. is an independent, nonprofit organization that provides transitional housing and supportive services to youth aged 16-20 who are experiencing homelessness. The supportive housing program, located in College Mall Apartments, provides a structured environment where young people can hone their independent living skills while taking their first steps in this critical stage of their lives. The program has five apartments within the complex that surround the residents with a community atmosphere. Residents share 2-bedroom furnished apartments and as they progress through the program, they start paying a larger portion of expenses. A community center with a live-in resident assistant serves as a place to meet with staff and community providers. Participation in the program is for two years with the ultimate goal to obtain permanent housing and be self-sustaining members of the community.

Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County provides services in an effort to strengthen families, divert youth from the juvenile justice system, and to foster positive youth development. Family support and structure are necessary to the development of our community's youth. YSB offers services which foster positive family functioning and help lay the groundwork to build healthy, productive individuals. They offer family preservation counseling at no cost to families at risk of abuse or neglect, or youth at risk of running away. YSB's Binkley House Youth Shelter is the largest division of YSB, and provides short-term residential care and crisis intervention for youth ages 8-17. The shelter provides services such as counseling, education, supervised recreation, transportation to and from school and other appointments, and referrals to a variety of agencies for related services. YSB also operates Project Safe Place, a community-wide outreach service for runaways and at-risk youth in crisis situations.

Special Section: Agency Reports

Agency Reports focuses on miscellaneous news and upcoming events from area agencies. This issue features several items from the SCCAP as well as other agencies.

South Central Community Action Program

History of South Central Community Action Program

By Todd Lare, Executive Director, South Central Community Action Program

The South Central Community Action Program has been helping local families for almost 45 years as a result of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964.

This Act, the start of President Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty, was signed into law 45 years ago on Aug. 20, 1964. It aimed to allow the most prosperous country in the world's history to achieve its full economic and social potential by giving every individual the opportunity to contribute to the full extent of his or her potential.

"For so long as man has lived on this earth, poverty has been his curse," Johnson said upon passage of this law. "On every continent in every age, men have sought escape from poverty's oppression. Today for the first time in all history of the human race, a great nation is able to make and is willing to make a commitment to eradicate poverty among its people."

Bold and optimistic, the Economic Opportunity Act was never funded and implemented at a level necessary to achieve its ultimate goal of eliminating poverty. But it has helped countless thousands of people in communities across the country through the creation of community action agencies and other federal programs to help those in poverty.

SCCAP, initially named the Monroe County Community Action Program, got its start after a group of citizens at the Christian Center (which later became Monroe County United Ministries) worked to get the local community's support to create the

agency and apply for funding through the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. At first, the new agency offered just a summer Head Start program and advocacy for the poor.

It has grown, though, to offer the largest range of services to low-income families of any organization in our area. It was renamed the South Central Community Action Program as it added Brown, Morgan and Owen counties to its service area.

Over the years, SCCAP has also been a leader in the creation of other organizations that serve low-income people. According to agency records, it helped develop and spin off the Well-Baby Clinic (started in 1972), Legal Services Bureau (1972), Health Services Bureau (1973), Rural Transit, Elderly Visitors Program, Older Workers, Senior Citizen's Prescription Program (1974), Occupational Development Center (1975), Dental Care Clinic (1981), Hoosier Hills Food Bank (1982), Brown County Summer Youth Program (1985) and Monroe County Housing Solutions (1989).

SCCAP has experienced a new spurt of growth over the past several months as a result of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009. With these funds, the agency is in the process of significantly expanding the number of households it can serve in its Head Start and Weatherization programs. The agency's budget has grown to about \$8.5 million this year, including \$3.68 million available to assist low-income families in heating their homes this winter.

Circles welcomes second class of graduates

By Bonnie Vesely, Coordinator of Monroe County Circles Initiative

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The Monroe County Circles Initiative is happy to announce the graduation of the second Monroe County "Getting Ahead in a Just Gettin'-By World" class! Ten participants in this 18-week training graduated in a moving ceremony on August 27th, 2009.

The Circles Initiative centered in Bloomington is 18 months old. It's one of ~50 Circles sites across the country, some having recently begun operations, and others preparing to begin soon. The Monroe County initiative is the second in Indiana, following Muncie, and followed by two new Indiana sites, with others in the planning stages.

The goal of the nationwide Circles Initiative is to end poverty. Circles takes a multi-faceted approach to bring this about. The strategy matches each trained, low-income "Circle Leader" with three trained "Community Allies," financially comfortable people who help Circle Leaders progress through the plan they create THEMSELVES to move out of poverty. Allies provide emotional support, assistance with problem-solving, friendship, and connections to the middle-class community.

Second, through outreach efforts, Circles educates Monroe County about the realities of poverty. Poverty simulations, Bridges Out of Poverty trainings, media pieces, and testimonials of Allies and Circle Leaders help the initiative accomplish this.

This creates understanding and momentum needed to accomplish the third facet of this strategy: working together as a community to break down local, state and national barriers that keep people from getting ahead. "Big View" meetings, which will take place monthly beginning in late January, during regular Thursday evening Circles Community meetings. All Monroe County residents who want to participate are invited. Circle Leaders lead the way, and are eager to make changes in their own lives as well as in the community.

Getting Ahead graduates each spoke at the ceremony about their lives and involvement with Circles. One new Circle Leader said:

"I started out, I was working 80 hours every two weeks; then I got my hours cut to 24 hours a week. I'm a single father, and when things got hard - they (fellow graduates) know about me, I was a corner boy from pretty much 15 to 24, 25, and if you don't know what that means, it's a drug dealer - and my way out every time I've been in trouble is to go back to that. And I can honestly say that Circles has played a big part in keeping away from doing that and channeling my interests into other directions and seeking out other ways to get help, other than to get back out there in the streets. And that means a lot to me because I have a 4-year old son that I take care of by myself. It's real hard as a single father because a lot of times you don't get the help that single mothers get... I've learned a lot from Circles. I've learned foremost that poverty isn't



First row L to R: Linda Patton (Circles Coach), Haley Kinser, Kay Goodman, Katie Hopkins, Rala Williams, Christine Combs (Family Development Coordinator), Bonnie Vesely (Circles Coordinator). Back row L to R: Paience Caldwell, Michelle Hunsicker, Joe Caldwell, Steve Otowo.

something that happened to the Black community, the White community, the Chinese and so forth - this is a rainbow problem. It happens everywhere, it happens to everybody. It's nothing to be ashamed of, and it's nothing to be mad and sad about. You just need to use your thinking cap and get it together. And together, I feel that we can make things happen and we can do things to make our

community better for our children and for their children. I plan to do in the future a little bit more for, myself, the youth in our community."

The first Circle Leaders were matched with Allies in April. The new graduates will be matched in December. With their enthusiasm, Monroe County is about to undergo a transformation!

SCCAP offers wide range of services for low-income citizens

By Doug Wilson, Director of Communications and Development, South Central Community Action Program

Check out our agency blog, *Inside SCCAP*, at www.insccap.wordpress.com for the latest news about SCCAP, its clients, staff and programs, and about issues related to people living in poverty.

The South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP) is a nonprofit organization based in Bloomington that has served low-income people for 44 years. Our mission is to provide opportunities for low-income citizens to move toward personal and economic independence.

SCCAP administers the Circles Initiative and Head Start programs in Monroe County, and also operates the Energy Assistance, Weatherization, Individual Development Account and Section 8 programs in Monroe, Morgan, Owen and Brown counties. It serves more than 5,000 families annually, representing more than 11,000 individuals.

For more information, call 339-3447 or for Head Start information, call 334-8350.

Energy Assistance: Income eligible households receive assistance with the high cost of winter heating. Also, emergency assistance is available to households in danger of disconnection from gas or

electric service, or who can't obtain fuel delivery during cold weather without help.

In addition, the Summer Cool Program provides assistance with electric bills to keep families cool. Air conditioners may also be obtained for those with certified medical reasons.

Head Start: The Head Start program serves children aged three through five and their families. Many services are provided to these children from low-income families, including health and nutrition, special needs services, family services parent involvement, social services and transportation. Head Start operates 15 classrooms around Monroe County with an enrollment of 235 children.

Weatherization: The Weatherization Program reduces energy consumption in low-income households and ensures that each client has a safe operating heat source. Each client receives a furnace inspection and an energy audit. SCCAP uses private contractors to install insulation and to seal the house. Homeowners and renters are eligible.

Circles Initiative: The Circles Initiative builds friendships across race and class lines and aids vulnerable families in achieving

self-sufficiency. Low-income participants attend a 15-week training, "Getting Ahead in a Just Getting by World," to increase their educational, financial, social and spiritual resources. These participants, called Circles Leaders, are then matched with trained "Circle Allies" who offer continued support. Weekly meetings help grow community, identify and address barriers to self-sufficiency and give back by offering information to the community about poverty in Monroe County.

Section 8 Housing: Section 8 Housing Vouchers assist very low-income households with safe, decent, and sanitary housing. This program allows households to find their own rental units within HUD's guidelines. The household's rent is subsidized based on their income.

Individual Development Accounts: The Individual Development Account Program assists qualifying individuals to accumulate savings and develop personal finance skills. The savings are deposited in a bank and the accounts receive matching funds from state and federal sources. These funds are then monitored by SCCAP and the participant and can be used for purchase or rehabilitation of a home, for col-

lege educational costs for the participant or a dependant, or for the purchase, startup, or expansion of a business.

Affordable Rental Housing: SCCAP has three rental units in the city of Bloomington and several units in Brown and Owen counties. These units are rented to families who are at, or below, 50% of the area median income guidelines and are more affordable to families because rents are below the market rate.

Family Development/Self-Sufficiency: This program helps families with multiple problems to become economically self-sufficient. Barriers often encountered are: lack of education, employment/training, vocational training, work experience, transportation, childcare, and life skills counseling.

Case managers work with the family to establish priorities and goals necessary to achieve self-sufficiency and form a step-by-step case management plan. Case managers work intensely with participants, providing life skills counseling, support, advocacy, decision-making and money management skills and reinforcement of positive self-esteem. Local agencies work cooperatively to insure that the participant receives appropriate services.

SCCAP helps resident with heating, bills

Shirley Beaumont never used to worry much about paying her utility bills.

That was before her husband, Russell, of almost 50 years died six years ago. Back when the retired couple was receiving both of their social security checks, as well as his pension from Indiana Bell, they could live reasonably comfortably in the home they'd bought in November 1960.

But these days, with just Shirley's fixed income from social security paying the bills, there's less of a cushion for unexpected expenses. Last winter, Shirley faced rising expenses that would be a problem even for a wealthier person when the cost of heating her home just west of Bloomington skyrocketed. In an all-electric house, she received an electric bill of \$345 one month and \$430 the next. She was still reeling from those bills when the next month's bill arrived - \$745.

"Oh my God," she recalled. "I cried."

Beaumont quickly did what she could to reduce her heating bills. A grandmother with three daughters and one son living in the area, she got their help in putting plastic

over her windows and closing off a room at one end of the house. Her family also helped with her heating expenses, just as Shirley still helps them in other ways. One daughter, Rhea Kutche, lives at Shirley's house some of the time as Rhea recovers from bone cancer.

Shirley hopes the biggest help with her utility bills, though, will come from the South Central Community Action Program providing energy efficiency improvements to her home this month. Shirley was identified as having high bills by her electric company and was referred to SCCAP's Weatherization Program.

Her home is one of the first of about 150 that SCCAP will weatherize using an \$899,232 grant it received from the U.S. Department of Energy and the Indiana Housing and Redevelopment Authority. That grant funding is coming from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Last week, SCCAP Weatherization Auditor Terry Crowe came to Shirley's home to do an energy audit that has determined the

most effective ways to cut her energy use while also making the more than 100-year-old home more comfortable in the winter. Using a visual inspection and sophisticated equipment to locate and measure energy loss, Crowe found areas where the home's heat is escaping during the winter. A ceiling in one bedroom, for instance, has a hole that's about eight feet by eight feet that has been concealed by a false or dropped ceiling. There are similar holes, allowing heat

to escape into the attic, over a stairwell and in a bedroom closet.

"I can't imagine how cold this closet is in the winter," Crowe said. "We're going to make a big difference in this house."

As Terry inspected the home using a blower door and an infrared camera, Shirley said she's thrilled at the improvements that will be made.

"I'm just so grateful," she said. "I really didn't know what I was going to do."



Shirley Beaumont had problems with an inefficient heating system and mounting bills before the SCCAP offered its help.



SCCAP Head Start program expanding this winter

By Lauren Sedam, SCCAP Communications Intern

As students have been making pumpkin projects, taking field trips and settling in, the SCCAP Head Start program is growing.

The Head Start program will be able to add 32 children (ages 3 to 5) starting in January. That change will be made possible through a \$262,327 grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The hope is that SCCAP will continue to receive this funding each year on an ongoing basis, although ARRA funding ends on Sept. 30, 2011. The additional 32 slots will mean that SCCAP provides early childhood education for a total of 267 children from low-income families.

"We will be providing two additional 6-hour per day, full-year classes with bus transportation," said Shirley Stumpner, SCCAP Director of Head Start. "Our current 6-hour per day, full year program at Lindbergh has a large wait list; this will be a great option for families that are working or going to school.

Most of the organization's existing Head Start classes meet only during the school year.

The expansion of the program will also add employment opportunities for two lead teachers, two teacher assistants, one family advocate, a bus driver, and a bus monitor.

One of the sites for the expanded program will be at Walnut Woods, in space owned by the Bloomington Housing Authority. The other site for the expanded program will mostly likely be at the Lindbergh site at SCCAP's main office. With these year-round classes replacing two that ran only through the academic year at the Walnut Woods and Lindbergh sites, SCCAP is looking to add two classrooms in new locations. If your organization is interested in talking to Head Start about a possible site, please contact Shirley Stumpner at 339-3447, ext. 244.

"I am sure our partnership with Bloomington Housing Authority was a key factor in being awarded these competitive funds," Stumpner said. "In fact, we have some very

strong partners who wrote very positive letters of support of this expansion."

The program has also recently hired Abbey Bonner to fill the newly created Fatherhood Behavior Management Specialist position.

Director of Head Start Shirley Stumpner and SCCAP Executive Director Todd Lare created the position after seeing the need for more fatherhood initiative, combining aspects of the Head Start, Circles and Family Advocacy programs under one position.

Bonner said her duties will be split. One aspect will focus on in-home behavior support, which helps parents learn alternatives to spanking through positive reinforcement. Through this, Bonner said she hopes to help parents become more confident in their skills.

Her other main duty will involve restarting the Hoosier Daddies meetings, a program which Bonner said fell by the wayside a few years back.

The meetings help teach Head Start fathers the importance of being a "24/7" presence in their child's life, as well as offering events for the whole family, such as bowling or game nights.

Bonner said the program will be opened to participants in the Circles program and, she hopes, eventually to the community at large.

"Coming from a place where I used to do work with families that was court ordered, it's nice to work with families that are actually asking for support," Bonner said.

The SCCAP has also received two other grants recently to support its Head Start program. One was a \$55,620 award in Quality Improvement funds for a new Head Start bus that is wheelchair accessible, and the other was a \$5,000 Head Start Body Start grant for a play-place at the Lakeview Elementary site.

Another grant application recently submitted was for Early Head Start funds. The SCCAP expects to hear back about these funds, which would allow the program to start serving infants from birth to 3 years old, as well as pregnant mothers, within the next couple of months.

Shalom Community Center Legal Programs

By Jacob Atz, Shalom Community Center Legal Coordinator

Access to free legal services has never been greater in Bloomington thanks to more than 100 lawyers and law students who have volunteered at the Shalom HELP Legal Clinic this past year. As an alternative to full representation services available through Indiana Legal Services and District 10 Pro Bono Project, walk-in clients of the HELP Legal Clinic can expect to sit down with an attorney that same afternoon and receive legal advice meant to help clients handle the situation without a full-time lawyer.

The HELP Legal Clinic is prepared to assist with any legal issue, but its clients most commonly seek help with housing and family law issues. Because legal advice is given on-site the same day, clients should bring with them as many documents and information related to their issue as possible.

The Shalom HELP Legal Clinic has recently opened a new branch to assist clients with gaining access to both Indiana state benefits and Social Security. Its regular Friday clinic has had great success navigating the benefit systems and obtaining benefits for clients, but the need has grown for a specialized clinic with volunteers trained to handle these involved cases. The new Shalom Benefits Clinic meets this need. The Benefits Clinic will operate in a similar fashion as the Legal Clinic. New clients can arrive at anytime during clinic hours, without an appointment, and receive assistance. Current clients can also stop by and receive information about their case.

The Benefits Clinic welcomes the experience of law students Blair Johnson and Alex Haugh. Blair Johnson, a third-year law student, has worked for several years assisting individuals applying for both SSD and SSI benefits and will serve as coordinator of the SSD/SSI portion of the clinic. Alex Haugh, also a third-year law student, has been vol-

unteering with Shalom Community Center for over a year, assisting clients at the legal clinic receive Food Stamps, Medicaid, TANF, and HIP. Alex will serve as coordinator of the state benefits portion of the clinic.

Despite having a specialized focus, this new clinic will provide numerous services. The primary goals of the clinic are to provide eligibility determinations and application assistance. Eligibility determinations ensure that clients are receiving all of the benefits for which they qualify. The clinic will then help clients through the application process from start to finish. This means not only assisting filling out the application itself, but following through, and ensuring that the application clears all administrative hurdles.

Other services that the clinic will provide are assistance with both FSSA and Social Security appeals, as well as on the spot assistance with active applications. The specific areas that the Benefits Clinic will be involved with are Social Security Disability (SSD), Social Supplemental Security Insurance (SSI), Medicaid, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Healthy Indiana Plan (HIP), and Food Stamps.

This new clinic will run in tandem with the highly successfully Shalom HELP Legal Clinic. With both of these clinics operating on different days, Shalom Community Center guests will have terrific access to legal and benefit assistance.

Both clinics are open to the public. The Shalom Benefits Clinic will be held between 2 and 4 p.m. on Thursdays at the Shalom Resource Center located in First Christian Church. The Shalom HELP Legal Clinic continues to operate every Friday between 1 and 4 p.m. at Trinity Episcopal Church at the corner of Kirkwood and Grant. For more information, please contact Jacob Atz at (812) 320-3717 or Jacob@shalomcommunitycenter.org.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

First Thursday of every month

Wonderlab: Present a special flier when you dine in or carry out your evening meal the first Thursday of the month at either Bloomington Bucceto's, and they will donate 20% of your total to help sustain WonderLab! Fliers are available each month at the museum welcome desk and to download from wonderlab.org.

Nov. 14, 2008

Shalom Community Center Benefit: Musicians featured on "Playin' for Change," a compact disc of original music written by singer-songwriter Kent Johnson, will celebrate the release of the CD with a benefit concert Saturday, November 14 at 8 PM. at Players Pub, 424 South Walnut, Bloomington. Sales

of the \$20 CD and proceeds from the concert will benefit the Shalom Community Center, which helps people experiencing poverty and homelessness in the Bloomington area. Concert tickets are \$5 and are available for purchase at Sunrise Box Office at the Buskirk-Chumley Theatre and at the door.

November 16-18

Lennie's, a Bloomington favorite since 1989, will celebrate the beginning of its 20th year in business by hosting three nights dedicated to raising money for three cornerstone Bloomington not-for-profits. All sales Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, November 16 - 18, will be shared between the Hoosier Hills Food Bank, Wonderlab Museum and Stone Belt.

January 30- February 6, 2010

The Week of Chocolate: Options' signature event, the Art of Chocolate, will be on Sunday, January 31 at the IU Art Museum from 5:30-8:00. The Week of Chocolate will be a community-wide celebration with 8 other non-profits joining Options to make it a week full of Chocolate fun!

Saturday, February 13

Cheers! The Science of Beer and Cheese: 7:00 pm - 10:00 pm at WonderLab Museum, 308 W. 4th St., Bloomington. Join WonderLab and industry experts at the museum for an evening exploring the

fascinating history and science of beer and cheese production. Experience fine micro-brews Indiana's largest microbrewery exquisite southern Indiana goat cheeses, and an outstanding selection of domestic cheeses. Tickets (\$50 per person) include tastings, hors d'oeuvres, beer bar, and non-alcoholic beverages. Proceeds benefit the WonderLab Museum of Science, Health and Technology, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Guests must be 21 years of age or older to attend. Information: wonderlab.org or Heidi Frankson at 337-1337 ext. 14.

See "Calendar," page eight

Special Section: Therapeutic Jail and Re-entry Programs

This section describes the many therapeutic and educational programs that take place in the Monroe County Jail to aid inmates while incarcerated and upon their release in changing their lives to make a successful re-entry into our society.

AIR Program: Our block is a very fine block

By Joan Foor White, New Leaf/New Life volunteer

They are ours for exactly two hours every Saturday in the therapeutic block (AKA the AIR community) of the Monroe County Jail. Susan Sandberg, city councilwoman-at-large, comes armed with her indefatigable good humor and bag of plays, poems, music, essays and the like, as well as paper and pencils for them to use. They are an interchangeable but unforgettable bunch as their stay in the block ranges from 2 weeks to 1 year or so. With no exception they partake in writing, discussions, play-reading, and we sometimes play music. In general it is exploration of themselves, each other, and the society from which they emerged that is our focus. They are affable, engaged and honest during our sessions and are invariably amazed that "you give up your free time to be with us." And we like being with them. Below are a few of their comments written at the beginning of a meeting regarding their feelings about the AIR community.

E.G.

The AIR Community is unlike any other environment I've yet to experience. This community is orchestrated through the New Leaf-New Life program and is basically a self-sustaining recovery program of twelve voluntary inmates who share one common denominator – change.

The impact this program has had in my life is profound. The AIR Community works on an individual from a holistic approach, addressing life skills in general. There is such a wide range of learning that one can take from this program, a lot of which can be attributed to the numerous volunteers who share their time with the AIR Community. One encounters a huge array of personalities and views on life from fellow community members and volunteers alike.

Personally, I am an aspiring artist and have been afforded the opportunity to hone my artistic abilities while participating in this program. This is a luxury most will never encounter in incarceration. This just supports the concept that AIR approaches recovery as a holistic approach and works on a person as a person - not a problem.

H. M.

What I have learned from the AIR program is that there is life without drugs and that I'm a person and not a door mat. Just because I have been deemed trouble, I still have a life and I'm not alone. There are people that have similar problems and the AIR program shows us that we can come together and help each other so we can stay out of here and better our lives. So, I say thank you people at the AIR program.

Anonymous comment

This is an opportunity to take a long look at my self and behavior in an environment that is conducive to self-reflection.

P. W.

Since I came to the AIR Community the experience I have encountered has been wonderful. The people involved are extremely friendly and helpful in all manners of our lives. At first I thought it was just going to be all about drug awareness and how to cope without using. Instead this experience has opened my eyes to music, theater, art, photography, drama, poetry and just any way you can express yourself in a manner that is positive. The ability to let your voice be heard in any number of ways really has been a shining light for a lot of us in this program. Also giving back to the community is a powerful idea that we have embraced and hope to put into motion once we get released back into society. I just want to say thank you for all of the time, support and hope these people have given me.

D. L.

The New Leaf-New Life Program and AIR (Addicts in Recovery) has helped me to learn more about myself than any other program of recovery that I've been in. I have been in numerous treatment programs and the focus has been only on drug and alcohol addiction. The sessions on Anger Management and Life Without a Crutch have helped me to look deeper within myself and the issues behind the issues. Also not being from here I look forward to the Saturday groups with Susan and Joan that have helped me discover

things that I really enjoy such as writing and music. I never thought of these things before, and it has helped to open my eyes and be able to express myself in a positive way.

J.F.

When I first came to the AIR program I did not take it very seriously at first because as with most addicts I was in denial about the degree of my addiction. The AIR program has helped me realize that my addiction had roots deeper than I knew. Now that I have a better understanding I can work on my recovery. Thanks to the AIR program and its volunteers. I know I have a good support system in place for when I get out of jail.

J. H.

New Leaf-New Life and the AIR Community have made a huge difference in the lives of many inmates in the Monroe County Jail. My name is John H. and I'm experiencing this first hand. When I was arrested in April things didn't look very good as I was charged with a B felony. After a few days my focus turned to how I might make the best of this time. Finding some way to better myself while trying to address my addiction problems became my #1 task. NL/NL provides me and eleven other inmates the perfect environment for this. We live together in the "downstairs dorm" taking part in groups such as Anger Management, AA and NA relapse prevention, etc. This seems to be a very unique program and has helped make a huge difference in my life. Lessons learned here will follow me wherever I go....thanks New Leaf/New Life!

J. S.

I think the AIR program has helped me a lot in the aspects of learning to cope with everyday life upon my release. It helps with our recovery as well as life skills needed for being a positive role model and citizen. The program provides us with numerous accommodations that the average prisoner doesn't have access to, which helps make it easier to focus on the problems at hand. The volunteers are here to help, and they care about our recovery. I believe that I have double the chances of making it on the outside now that I have been allowed to participate in this program.

A.J. S.

To start, I've been in this program for five months. It has had a great impact on my life. I handle myself in a lot better way. I would like to say I've turned over a new leaf. I've seen the changes and my family has also. I've learned many new life skills that I feel I lacked. I believe that I'm a better person, father, son, and friend. Thanks to this program and New Leaf-New Life. I only wish and hope that many more have the chance to change as I have done.

C. P.

Since I've been in the New Leaf-New Life AIR program I've learned how other people deal with their addiction and problems which give me other ways to deal with my addiction and problems. I have learned a lot from the people in this program. It is a very good program for people who want help. Thank you.

Calendar

Continued from page seven

Area 10 Agency on Aging 3rd Annual Flapjack's Cocoa Café: A

scrumptious and chocolaty all-you-can-eat pancake feast. Enjoy golden or chocolate chip pancakes and toppings galore. 100% of proceeds go towards programming to serve local older adults. Drop in anytime between 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. First Presbyterian Church, 221 E 6th St, Bloomington. Ticket prices: \$5-\$7.50 (child, senior, student) \$6.50-\$9 (adult). Ticket prices lower if pre-purchased. Please call Area 10 at 812-876-3383 for questions or to order tickets.

April 25

"Spring Into Action!" Luncheon and Silent Auction to benefit Monroe County United Ministries Sunday, April 25, 11:30 at the Bloomington Monroe County Convention Center 339-3429 or www.mcum.org for more information.

Shelter

Continued from page four

All volunteers will receive intensive training so

that there is continuity and coordination between the sites. Participating sites and volunteers will agree to follow a set of guidelines that allows for the safety and well being of guests and volunteers alike, including no drugs, alcohol, or weapons on the premise.

We anticipate that this project will increase the entire community's awareness of the plight of people who are homeless because we are interfacing with so

many different congregations and agencies and because of the resulting significant increase in the volunteer base. We believe that statistics gathered will assist the township, city and county to become increasingly cognizant of a need for more housing options for this vulnerable population. This project has the additional benefit of energizing the private sector (personnel and money) to further address the problem of homelessness in Monroe County. In addition, it has the potential to relieve the police, the city, the jail and other publicly funded organizations of cost and time.

Site locations:

Sunday: The Juke Box, 3rd St., Parks & Rec building
Monday & Tuesday: First United Church, E. Third St.
Wednesday: Trinity Episcopal Church, Grant & Kirkwood
Thursday & Friday: First Christian Church, Washington & Kirkwood
Saturday: Trinity Episcopal Church, Grant & Kirkwood
Visit our website to learn more or volunteer: interfaithwintershelter.org
Information: Contact one of the above congregations.

New Leaf/New Life helps current, former inmates

By Debra Morrow –Volunteer Coordinator New Leaf-New Life

New Leaf-New Life is a volunteer driven, non-profit organization located in Monroe County which strives to serve the needs of the incarcerated, and those recently released from incarceration. New Leaf-New Life's goals include helping the population they serve create better life circumstances for themselves that will enable them to become productive members of the community. This is accomplished by providing supportive services and encouragement. New Leaf-New Life entirely supports and encourages compliance with Community Corrections, and Probation/Parole conditions as these are seen as vital to the reentry process. New Leaf-New Life provides services by offering support groups, referrals, mentoring, and advisement in employment and housing options. New Leaf-New Life hopes to be a contributing partner in helping make Monroe County a better and safer community for everyone.

New Leaf-New Life's first introduction to those they work with often occurs in

the Monroe County Correctional Center, where with the support of MCCC staff, they are able to provide programming to the inmates. The programs offered inside the jail include: the Air Community, which is a therapeutic program for men who want to use their period of incarceration to address their addiction issues; Intake Classes, which help the inmates recognize what brought them to the point of incarceration and helps them look at their decisions; writing groups; enrichment classes; and Bingo. The in-jail programs allow the inmates to become acquainted with volunteers, who act as responsible role models, and the relationships that are built help break down the barriers of an "us and them" society. Many inmates feel that they are ostracized from the community, and by allowing the community to take an active interest in the lives of these individuals, the inmates learn that they can be accepted by the community and this can help create a more successful re-entry.

The Transitions Program, which is offered

both inside and outside the Monroe County Correctional Center, helps inmates address critical issues such as housing needs, birth certificates, and referrals to social service organizations. Transitions services also include providing applications for the Amethyst House, bus passes for job hunting, clothing for inmates in need, support groups and job help located at the New Leaf-New Life cubicle at Work-One. Transitions is a vital part of the programming that New Leaf-New Life offers due to the importance and necessity of a successful re-entry into the community, which is a positive contributing factor in preventing an individual from reoffending. New Leaf-New Life workers and volunteers pride themselves on providing support groups, and opportunities for those they serve to keep in contact with New Leaf-New Life after release, and this continuation of contact, from incarceration to after release, can allow New Leaf-New Life to encourage those who they work with to grow, and develop more positive life skills and habits

that will ultimately help them create better a better future for themselves.

New Leaf –New Life recognizes the needs that exist for the inmates, released inmates and their families and this organization continues to try to meet these needs, while working in a manner that respects the needs and requirements of the Monroe County Correctional Center and the Monroe County Criminal Justice System. The wonderful groups of volunteers who are active in this organization are a testament to the dedication of this community's dedication and desire to work toward a cooperative solution to the challenges faced by those who have offended and the desire to create a better and safer community for everyone.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed it's the only thing that ever has"

- Margaret Mead

Friends of Prisoners

By Richard Holl, Friends of Prisoners Task Force

richardholl9@yahoo.com

Friends of Prisoners has been meeting monthly working on issues of concern to prisoners and their families. The focus has been on our local Monroe County jail with additional concerns for those incarcerated in other Indiana prisons.

Glenda Breeden who heads our task force has urged us to work on the need for solutions to the problem of families waiting literally for hours behind the jail, especially on Sunday afternoons and Wednesday evenings to visit their loved ones. There is only a small waiting room in the jail if the weather is inclement. Children playing in the alley are at risk from high speed traffic. Once their visiting time is posted, families may find they

have hours to wait yet not enough time to return home and come back. Two weeks ago at 1:00 P.M. there were twelve women waiting and about 24 children.

The task force wanted to work with the police department to solve the issues. We requested a meeting with the jail officials to determine their interest in solving this problem and to solicit their ideas and their reaction to an idea we would present. That is that we would coordinate the visiting hours for the jail maintaining computer files and phoning families in advance with specific visiting times. Dustin Cantrell and the mother of a prisoner met Controller, Major Fuller, at the jail. They reported they had a long and friendly visit and our concerns were heard. Our main idea was rejected as unworkable

and adequate reasons were given.

We were told that Sheriff Kennedy has a plan that will alleviate the crowded visiting time as soon as it can be implemented. The jail is waiting for grant money which they believe is coming. This will be used to set up telephone stations in the expanded visitors area so many families can communicate at the same time with prisoners. These are not video phones so there will be no visual contact.

While researching this issue several other possibilities were considered. To give shelter to the visitors we we have discussed with the city the possibility of obtaining some space in the garage across the street. We had meetings with Andrew Libby from IU who indicated we could possibly get help programming for the children and their parents and implementing the activities. We obtained permis-

sion to use the parking lot where the Farmers Market sets up. Purchasing a bus was considered. One more benefit from our inquiry was that attendance at our meetings increased to seven to ten active participants.

Other activities of the task force have been supporting a quilt project in a prison. The quilts have been donated to shelters in town such as Middle Way House. A fund raiser was held by one of the Bloomington Unitarian/Universalist church members for FofP. We support a program for mentoring of prisoners to encourage job and educational goals. We also consider other issues in jail life. Our meetings are open. Meetings are generally the second Wednesday of each month at 1:00 p.m. The next will be at the Unitarian Church on Wednesday November 11 at 1:00 p.m.

Special Section: Volunteer Opportunities

Volunteer Opportunities outlines the multiple opportunities to lend a hand in and around Bloomington, as well as testimonials from current volunteers. The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network keeps a huge archive of volunteer positions for all ages and skills at <http://bloomington.in.gov/volunteer/>.

Thanksgiving basket distribution – Nov. 21

Volunteers are needed on Nov. 21 to escort applicants around to 11 food stations and out to a truck to pick up their turkeys at Backstreet Missions. Volunteers will also staff the food stations and pass out canned or boxed food. This is a great opportunity to brighten the holiday for others - last year 500 families received Thanksgiving food baskets! Shifts are from 10 a.m.-1 p.m. and 1-4 p.m. Drivers are also needed to deliver to shut-ins. Volunteers need to arrive 15 minutes prior to their shift for minimal training. Minimum age is 18. Please contact Linda Kelley at (812) 333-6360 or linda@backstreet.org. (www.backstreet.org)

Volunteer Services Assistant

This volunteer will assist the Director of

Volunteer Services at the Shalom Community Center with recruitment and placement of new volunteers. Duties include creation of flyers and brochures, visiting local businesses, presentations to community groups, and conducting volunteer orientations. This position requires a major volunteer commitment with a requirement of volunteering at least 15 hours per week. Volunteers should have experience in a professional work atmosphere, be comfortable talking with business representatives, and have experience in giving presentations and conducting training sessions. Minimum age is 21. Please contact Pam Kinnaman at (812) 334-5734 or pam@shalomcommunitycenter.org. (www.shalomcommunitycenter.org)

Adult Education Tutors and Assistants

The MCCSC Adult Education program helps local residents "go back to their future"! Patient, welcoming, and flexible tutors are needed to work with adult learners in reading, math, English as a Second Language, or computer basics under the supervision of a licensed teacher. Classes are offered mornings, afternoons, and evenings. Make a difference in these students' lives while building lasting relationships. The only degree you need is a degree of caring! Minimum age is 18. Please contact Melanie Hunter at (812) 330-7731 ext. 3 or mhunter@mccsc.edu. (www.adult.mccsc.edu)

Youth Shelter Assistant

The Binkley House Youth Shelter temporary

ly houses youth aged 8 to 17 who are experiencing crisis. Volunteers assist paid staff with basic supervision and a behavior modification program, and also demonstrate life skills such as conflict resolution and communication skills. Volunteers must be at least 21 years of age, willing to obtain a physical exam, TB test, obtain certification in First Aid and CPR, undergo a criminal background check, and other required trainings. A minimum six month commitment, volunteering at least three times per month, is requested. Please contact Marcus Whited, Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County, at (812) 349-2987 or mwhited@co.monroe.in.us. (www.youthservicesbureau.net)

See "Volunteer," page 10

Special Section: Voices Seldom Heard

Voices Seldom Heard provides a space for self-reflective writings from people in our community.

Women Writing For (a) Change

Women Writing for (a) Change is just one of the many programs operating under the New Leaf New Life umbrella at the Monroe County Corrections Center. 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.

The following poem was written by a woman at the MCCC and is printed here with her permission.

Keeping it REAL

I determine my self-esteem with
Confident, mixed with pride,
It doesn't matter what people think
about me, it's how I feel about myself inside.
The Lord is the one who plays a major
role in my life.
Without him my self-esteem wouldn't
Stand a chance in this world to fight.
The Lord has the Last answer, He's the
real judge, you see.
So it really doesn't matter how
people look or view me,
You can't expect to get over on people
And believe you're going to win.
So I start my day off Daily
with "Lord forgive me of my sins".
I know I'm not perfect and
will never claim to be, But I
try to treat people the way I want
them to treat me.
The reason I wrote this poem
is to let people know,
what goes around comes around
"You reap what you sow",
So if you clean your heart
and clean your soul, you'll get
that peace if mind,
Some people search a lifetime and can never
Find,
See in the Mix of a Storm
I feel like it's a sunny day,
because my God has the power
to make me feel that way.

-Joyce Berry

Shalom Writers' Circle

The Shalom Writers' Circle is a weekly meeting of writers interested in exploring and giving voice to their stories through poetry, prose, and song. The Circle meets every Wednesday morning at 10:00 at the Shalom Center and always welcomes new participants. The circle also occasionally holds public readings of their poetry at a local café. For more information, contact Shannon Gayk at sgayk@indiana.edu.

One Man's Loss

One man's loss is another man's gain,
One man's pride is another man's pain...
One man's gasp is another man's breath,
One man's life is another man's death...
One man's fight is another man's loss,
One man's price is another man's cost...
One man's nose is another man's tie,
One man's truth is another man's lie...

Alcohol and cigarettes
Made my yesterday...
Woke up on railroad tracks,
Freight train comin' my way...
Shipwrecked here on dry-land,
On a mid-western-desert I-land...
Waitin' for the Mermaid to rescue me,
I'll sail her soul on the open sea...

One man's love is another man's hate,
One man's choice is another man's fate...
One man's night is another man's day,
We all know it can't be any other way...
Everything that we do today,
Affects us all in some small way...
We live on this Earth together,
Lets try to weather...
Weather the Storm.

- Kent Johnson

Blocks

Concrete, a lime based resin
Called cement
That water makes sticky
With sand
And rather small aggregate
Tumbled together
The slump falls into a mold
Where simple air takes the water away
Leaving behind a square of stone
And the walling in or walling out
Now has it's material element
From Jericho to the east of west Berlin
The work of drone
And human soldier ant
Stacking cities to the sky
Stockade and bunker build
From war to bloody war
A wall is a work
A man can stand behind
Something to defend
Kill the Reds kill the Cong
Kill them rotten Nazis
Shoot 'em where they stand
Down in hot Sudan
Behind the ageless wall
Around the world
Where the tears of wisdom fall
For men so lost
Between their capitol ambition
And their biologic clocks
Lost in the history of everland
And their mountains of building blocks

- Kay Bull

Volunteer

Continued from page 9

Circles Initiative Meal Preparation

The Circles Initiative builds relationships across race and class lines and aid vulnerable families in achieving self-sufficiency - and to ultimately end poverty in Monroe County. Four to six volunteers are needed for Thursday night meetings to prepare and clean up after an evening meal from 4:30 - 7:30 p.m. Your experience will contain lots of interaction with fun, interesting people. Ingredients and supplies provided. A week-to-week obligation is not necessary. Minimum age is 18. Contact Thomas Kenning, South Central Community Action Program, at (812) 339-3447 ext 263 or thomas@sccap.monroe.in.us (www.sccap.monroe.in.us)

Meal Preparation and Serving

Both locals residents and college students are needed to volunteer at the Community Kitchen. Prep shift volunteers (11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) prepare cold carry-out meals, lunches for after-school programs, chop fruits and vegetables, open canned goods, clean the kitchen or wash dishes. The five serving shift volunteers (3:30-6:30 p.m.) serve the evening meal cafeteria-style and clean up. Those age 14 and older may volunteer without an adult. Youth 10-13 may volunteer if accompanied by an adult. Please contact Annie Brookshire at (812) 332-0999 or volunteer@monroecommunitykitchen.com (www.monroecommunitykitchen.com)

School Bigs Program

A "School Big" is a volunteer who spends time mentoring a middle school or elementary school student during the school day on school grounds. School "matches" enjoy card games, reading, shooting baskets, journal writing or just sharing a laugh. These simple activities and the friendship that develops make coming to school fun and rewarding. Minimum commitment is one year; training and an interview are required. A car is strongly recommended. Minimum age is 18. Please contact Melissa Wickens, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana, at (812) 334-2828 ext. 221 or melissa@bigsindiana.org (www.bigsindiana.org)

Habitat ReStore

This donation/retail center accepts building materials and home furnishings and sells them to the public at a deeply discounted price. All proceeds go to Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County. Volunteers are needed for: Sales, Greeter/Customer Relations, Show-room Staging, Bookstore, Donation Pick-Up, Donation Intake, Donation Repair, and Facility Maintenance. The schedule is flexible; they will work with you directly to find the best fit for your interest and talents. They prefer volunteers who can commit to a regular schedule; snowbirds welcome! Some positions require lifting of up to 50 lbs. Minimum age is 18. Please contact Lydia Campbell-Maher at (812) 331-2660 or maher@monroecountyhabitat.org (www.monroecountyhabitat.org)

Special Section: Youth Programs

This section focuses on youth services in and around Monroe County. For more information on youth programs, please see the Agency Reference Guide, pages 13-16.

Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana

By Kathy Delaney Willett, Director of Outreach and Enrollment, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana

The mission of Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana is to help children reach their potential through professionally supported one-to-one relationships with measureable impact. Simply put, the staff at Big Brothers Big Sisters facilitates and coaches friendships between interested adults and children within the Monroe and Owen county communities. In 2008 the agency served 868 children in one to one matches and an additional 140 children in First Friends, an activity program for children who are waiting for a Big Brother or Big Sister. Currently, the agency is on target to serve a total of 1400 children by the end of this year. The impact of these relationships, obtained through independent national research, illustrates the value of the agency's continued growth, not only to children and volunteers, but to the community at large. For example, children who are matched with a Big Brother or Big Sister are 46% less likely to start using illegal drugs, 52% less likely to skip school and 27% less likely to start drink-



Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana

ing alcohol. (Public/Private Ventures) Additionally, recent finding by Harris Interactive show that alumni of Big Brothers Big Sisters have higher incomes and are 75% more likely than non-alumni of similar backgrounds to receive a four year college degree.

The organization which is now called Big Brothers Big Sisters of America was founded in 1904 by Ernest Coulter. Mr. Coulter worked as a clerk for the juvenile court in New York City. Over the course of years in his working life, he witnessed the suffering of thousands of children who came through the court system. Determined to assist these children, Mr. Coulter attended a meeting of civic and business

leaders and appealed to those present to become a "Big Brother" to a child. Everyone who attended the meeting, 39 men in all, did so, creating the movement that is now Big Brothers Big Sisters.

In the spirit of Coulter's vision, three local civic-minded men; the Reverend Paul Crafton, George Taliaferro and Jack Harlow, founded the local Big Brothers Big Sisters of Monroe County in 1973. Taliaferro had been a Big Brother while playing professional football in Baltimore, Crafton was active in the faith community and Harlow worked in corrections. For Harlow, like Ernest Coulter before him, the motivation came from seeing young faces in the criminal justice system. Jack

is now retired, but remains an active member of the agency's board of directors.

In 2001 a dedicated and determined group of volunteers generated the resources to open a branch of Big Brothers Big Sisters in Owen County, prompting the agency's name change to Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana. Judge Frank Nardi served as the first Big Brother in Owen county.

Currently there are over 100 children in our community, 70% of whom are boys, waiting for the fun and opportunity that a friendship with a caring Big Brother or Big Sister can provide. To apply to be a Big or to learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana visit www.bigsindiana.org.

Little Contributions Make a Big Impact

By Sarah Knoth

Today, my little, Molly, gave me a picture of hearts, and it is now hanging up on my refrigerator. As a mentor for Big Brothers Big Sisters, I am so lucky to have moments like this. A simple piece of paper with different colored hearts is a small gesture that shows me how important my relationship with Molly is, and it fuels my enthusiasm about mentoring her each week that much more.

I first met Molly when she was in the third grade at Templeton Elementary, and now she's a big fifth grader! I was a sophomore at Indiana University, and now I'm a senior. The time I have spent with Molly has shown me how I have grown, and how she has grown.

Molly used to be shy and not immediately open with her feelings. As the years have gone by, she has opened up immensely. We talk about friendships she has with those in her class, we talk about her teachers, how she is doing in school, and her life at home. Molly has told me about girls who haven't been kind to her on the playground, and I offer advice on how to treat these certain situations. I told her that I, too, was once her age, and I had my struggles in gym and in the classroom. Telling her these stories, Molly has chosen to open up to me. I asked her if she trusts me, and, without hesitation, she told me she does. I smile a little bigger each time I see her because having the trust of a young child is seeing yourself in them.

Putting words to any relationship is a difficult task. I asked Molly a few questions about our friendship, and when I asked her what her favorite aspect of our friendship was, this long time that we have spent together, learning about each other, she responded simply with "Everything!" I can't ask for much more than that. She told me that I have been a positive influence on her; I have helped her with her math homework, and I'm majoring in English! Knowing this, Molly asked for help with a story she had to write last year. I felt honored to be able to help teach her some basics in writing like creating a scene full of imagery.

One of the aspects of mentoring Molly and I love most is that I have the opportunity to give advice to a younger person about things that I have experienced before, difficult things and happy things as well. When she picks out another board game to play in the



Photo submitted

library after our time is up, I feel like I have made an impact on this little girl, this growing girl. Often she asks if I can stay just a bit longer; this shows me that she values our time, and, in any relationship, the value of the time spent together is key to the growth of the two individuals together. Because she respects our time together, I know that she listens to my advice. I know that she looks up to me. Those hearts on my refrigerator remind me to be a kid again, to encourage others to mentor and have these kinds of experiences, and, most of all, they remind me of Molly.

Additional Reports

Coming together for a cause: The Shalom Center Dining Hall

By Ron Kerner, Director of Hunger Relief, Shalom Community Center

Volunteers are the key component to the daily operation of the Shalom Community Center dining hall. We would not be able to create the quantity or the quality of food we prepare without the hard work and dedication of the volunteers at Shalom. Over 450 different people came to the Shalom dining hall to volunteer in 2007. The volunteers at Shalom are a very diverse group of people spanning all age groups, and a beautiful palette of cultural and ethnic diversity enlivens the Shalom dining hall. Our community volunteers provide the foundation to our success here at Shalom. Community volunteers are those who live in the Bloomington area and have been coming to Shalom to volunteer for several years and some have been here at Shalom from its beginnings. Their commitment and caring nature is inspiring. Our guests that come to Shalom are always willing to help and many of them pitch in on a daily basis. Many businesses, schools and organizations from the community have assisted us in our endeavors: Ivy Tech, Girls, Inc., Middle Way House, Harmony School, Crescent Donuts, Bloomington Bagel Company and so many more. The support we receive from area churches is immeasurable and we have a lot of gratitude for the kindness of the Beth-Shalom Synagogue. We have had the IU men's basketball team serve lunch here at Shalom, and the women's basketball team has helped us a great deal. Other IU teams and an International Club have also devoted volunteer time. Individual students from Indiana University come in for a class assignment and are only here for two hours on one day. Other students commit to several hours per week and come on a regular basis, and many return after summer to join in our efforts again. But no matter how much time or how little time a person can commit to our mission, it is appreciated and very helpful to those who utilize our feeding program. The staff of Shalom is continually amazed by the altruism shown by our volunteers.

The Shalom Community Center dining hall serves a free breakfast and lunch Monday through Friday. Our breakfast usually consists of cold cereal, milk, juice, coffee, donuts, bagels, toast with jelly, fruit and yogurt. A couple times a month volunteer groups from the First United Methodist Church come in and cook a hot breakfast of scrambled eggs, hash browns, and sausages. Our lunches are an entree, which may be anything from spaghetti to chicken potpie, beef stew with biscuits, chili, scalloped potatoes with ham and many other main course dishes. We make wonderful fresh fruit salads and great garden salads that are delicious and nutritious. A vegetable and bread and butter are also served every day.

On an average day at breakfast we will use 6-8 boxes of cereal, 3-4 gallons each of milk and juice, 4-5 pounds of brewed coffee, several loaves of bread, a couple pounds of butter, plus our other breakfast items. We plan for about 80-100 people for breakfast, and it is served from 8:00 am until 9:30 am. A spaghetti lunch, for example, we will



Ron Kerner (left) and volunteers provide hot meals to grateful Shalom Center guests every day.

need 20 pounds of hamburger, 6-8 gallons of spaghetti sauce and 14-16 pounds of pasta. To prepare our garden salads we need 8-10 heads of lettuce and we will add a dozen tomatoes along with other salad vegetables. Our fruit salads consist of perfectly ripe melons and berries; cantaloupe, watermelon, strawberries, raspberries and more. We will make 8-10 gallons of iced tea on an average day. Our desserts are always decadently delicious; whether it is pies, cookies and cakes from Kroger or our homemade cobblers. We plan for about 175-200 servings for our lunches and it is served from noon until 1:30 pm. And all this great food preparation and serving leads to piles of dirty dishes and pots and pans. We also recycle cardboard, cans, glass and plastic.

As you can imagine it takes a crew of many people working together to accomplish our daily kitchen tasks. It is a testament to the wonderful community we live in that our goals are met each day. If you think you might enjoy helping others with a basic human need, nourishment, while working in a busy, vibrant and fun environment, you might like to volunteer at the Shalom Center dining hall. Come join us!

Why I volunteer at the Shalom Center

By Jacob Whelchel Hardesty, I.U. graduate student

Indiana University is consistently ranked as one of the best public research universities in the country and I know I have been given a wonderful opportunity to pursue graduate study here. I look forward to the teaching and interacting with undergraduates that comes with it, the long days that education at this level requires, and the hours in one of our many excellent libraries following my own interests. But graduate study, for all its advantages, can be a selfish endeavor, or maybe better, self-centered. To break into and be successful in the world of academia, one must find their

own niche – that one contribution to some broader knowledge that others cannot or have not considered.

Whenever I go visit my family at home, I volunteer with an organization similar to Shalom, i.e. Episcopalian Metropolitan Ministries. At EMM I answer the phone, check in clients, and occasionally ask babies to draw pictures we could put on the wall. Over the course of my first year of graduate school I came to realize that I missed that feeling of contributing something to help others. And although I do think that the knowledge created in the university does

lead to improved conditions for others, I came to miss the immediacy of a similar feeling I got when volunteering.

I have been working as a hospitality volunteer at Shalom since the beginning of the summer. In my hours at Shalom I do many of the same tasks as at EMM – check mail and messages, answer phones, give out soap and shampoo, check guests into the shower, and assist guests with storage (and anything else Mary asks). Of course, some days go faster than others and some days are harder than others. But that doesn't mean that I don't see my time there

as worthwhile, that I don't feel a sense of fulfillment when I leave at the end of the day. And anyone who has been to the hospitality center knows those "slow" days are truly few and far between, and I am always hearing thanks from guests and staff members about the hours I volunteer.

I was talking recently with a friend about the nature of graduate school. We were discussing what part of our weeks gave us the greatest satisfaction and I answered how my hours at Shalom are mine. For me, it is the necessary balance in graduate education.

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.

Centerstone of Indiana, Inc.

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. Centerstone 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: About: HIV testing and extensive care coordination for those living with HIV/AIDS. Serve as a community resource regarding HIV/AIDS education and awareness. Also offer Hepatitis B, Hepatitis C and Syphilis testing.

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

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

Address: 200 E. Winslow Rd.

Phone: (812) 332-9615

Web: www.optionsfbl.com

Volunteer Contact: Karen Scherer, (kscherer@optionsfbl.com)

About: For over 26 years, Options has provided customer-oriented, community integrated services to people of all ages with disabilities. Options offers customized services in community living, employment and continuing education. Other services include health care coordination, behavior supports and respite. Options services are available in seven South-Central Indiana counties. Options' mission is to partner with people with disabilities and their communities to bring about self-directed and fulfilled lives.

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

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.

IN Dept. of Child Services

Address: 1717 W. 3rd St.

Phone: (812) 336-6351

About: Services are designed to protect children from abuse and neglect by partnering with families and communities to provide safe, nurturing, and stable homes. To make a report of child abuse or neglect the public can call 1-800-800-5556.

Division of Family Resources

Address: 1787 W. 3rd St.

Phone: 1-(800)-403-0864

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

WIC Program

Address: 333 East Miller Drive

Phone: (812) 353-3221

About: Provides nutritional support for underprivileged mothers, babies and children up to five years of age in Monroe and Greene Counties. Applicants must meet income guidelines, live in Indiana, and have a nutritional need. All services are provided free of charge.

Food stamps

Division of Family Resources

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.

Bloomington Hospital Home Health & Hospice

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. 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 screenings for hypertension, hyperlipidemia, elevated blood sugar, anemia, elevated lead, tuberculosis, head lice and pregnancy; health and wellness assessments; communicable disease education. Call for appointment.

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: Shelley Sallee ([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; vorpem@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.

Bloomington Catholic Worker

Address: 577 Graham Place

Phone: (812) 339-4456

Thursdays: Dinner on 1st and 3rd Thursday of the Month, 7:30pm- 9:00pm

Saturdays: Brunch on 2nd & 4th Saturdays of the month, 10:00am-12:00noon.

About: Provides home-based open-table meals. Graham Place is just south of Bloomington South High School off of Henderson Ave. Take the #1 or #7 bus. 577 is in the first set of houses on the right. You can call to inquire about rides.

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. Also provides meals for after-school programs at Boys and Girls Club, The Rise, Girls, Inc., Monroe County Community Corrections JAMS Program, Teen Learning Center, and Rhino's Youth Center.

Community Kitchen Express

Address: 100 W. 11th St.

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

About: 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

Division of Family Resources

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 Division of Family Resources 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; nrumble.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

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) 332-1262

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) 349-2890

Web: www.newleaf-newlife.org

About: Volunteers work both inside and outside the jail to help inmates, and those recently released from jail transition successfully back into society. Services offered include: employment help; support groups; family support; and community referrals. Volunteer opportunities can include: mentoring; transition services; office work; family outreach; or programming in the jail.