

HOMELESS TIMES



A publication of the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless

600-B East Gude Drive, Rockville, MD 20850

www.mcch.net

(301) 217-0314

Fall 2006

New Housing Options - Ending Homelessness



A condominium complex formerly homeless individuals now call home.



Inside one of the Coalition's units before the new tenant moves in.



Coalition Homes, Inc owns and manages ten units at this complex.

The Coalition has begun to place homeless individuals and families in a variety of permanent housing options created over the past year – effectively ending their homelessness. Twelve disabled adults who have been homeless for an extended period of time are being housed through Home First in two four-bedroom houses and four one-bedroom apartments. Through Home First, these individuals will not only have a place to call home but will also receive case management services to ensure that they remain housed. An additional twelve disabled homeless, and formerly homeless, adults are being placed in units owned by the Coalition and linked to existing community resources. Starting this fall, fifty-five households of single adults, couples without children, and families will be placed into their own rental units by the Partnership for Permanent Housing. These households will not only receive a housing subsidy, but also onsite, tailored case management services. We would like to thank the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Montgomery County Department of Housing & Community Affairs, Department of Health and Human Services, and the County Council for their support of these important initiatives. As important as it is to end homelessness for these individuals and families, it also brings us closer to our goal of ending homelessness in our community.

The Coalition Unveils its New Mission Statement

The Board of Directors of the Coalition recently adopted a new mission statement – “The Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless leads the effort to end homelessness in our community by creating housing options, providing supportive services, and facilitating collaboration, education and advocacy based on the belief that every person is entitled to the dignity of a home”, replacing one developed approximately eight years ago. This new statement more accurately reflects our current vision, goals, principles, and day-to-day activities and became necessary due to the Coalition’s tremendous growth and development over the past few years. The staff reaction has been overwhelmingly positive, believing this revised mission statement correctly underlies the work they do each day.

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Adrienne's Havens: Lee Jansky, *Case Manager*, Jim Russ, *House Manager*, Tesfaye Mekuria, Alexander Perry, David Roberts, *Residential Aides*

Laytonsville Havens: Rebecca Urban, *Case Manager*, Maria Cole, *House Manager*, Anne Chapin, Pat Ellsbury, Stephanie Everette, Catherine Nzams, Jill Ochs, *Residential Aides*

Gaithersburg Havens: Jean Ekpenyong, *Case Manager*, Melonie Campbell, *House Manager*, Velda Nzams, Jameelah Muhammad, Velda Nzams, Rosa Sorrell, Sharon Taylor, Sandra Wallace, Rose White, Lisa Wood, *Residential Aides*

Takoma Park Havens: Carolyn Amspaugh, *Case Manager*, Joanne Stubbs, *House Manager*, Lisa Cook, Juanita Reed, Merchell Reedy, *Residential Aides*

Seneca Heights Apartments: Olivia Moore, Veronica Pease, Elaine Sands, Allison Suarez-Charles, *Case Managers*, Renee Malone, *Program Assistant*, Samuel Bannerman, Raymond Griffin, Harold Jones, Nora Parker, Michael Shields, Jerita Williams, *Desk Staff*, Joseph Perry, *Driver*, Clinton Wilson, *Maintenance Supervisor*

Partnership for Permanent Housing: Chandra Harris, *Senior Case Manager*, Esther Ihionu, *Case Manager*

Letter from a Coalition Team Member

Dear Coalition Supporters,

I would like to introduce myself to those of you who haven't met me yet. My name is Joan Harris and I am the clinical director for the Men's Emergency Shelter, providing shelter to single, homeless men. The past five years I have been working with the same population of men in Montgomery County at Bethesda Cares as the outreach social worker. In addition, the past two years while working with homeless clients, I earned my masters in social work at Howard University. Although I loved my position at Bethesda Cares, I resigned to find a more challenging position which would improve my newly learned skills and talents. I am very pleased to work for an organization such as the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless because it provides staff with a great opportunity to cultivate their professional goals and objectives while serving a community of individuals that desperately needs our services. My colleagues provide me with a strong knowledge base that helps me to meet client needs and provide support and encouragement to the homeless men who are sheltered daily.

On a personal note, I am the mother of three children with the youngest attending Penn State University ****GO NITTANY LIONS****. I am not clear how it happened, but my youngest daughter is working on a Bachelor of Science degree in counseling and human services and plans to finish her college career with a JD degree. My oldest child is married with four children and my middle child I constantly pray for. I have four wonderful grandchildren who keep me forever young, smiling and pockets empty. I try to live my life to the fullest personally and professionally. I respect each person no matter what their status or position in life because I feel I'm always just one step away from being at the lowest point and one step away from being at the highest.

Yours,

Joan O. Harris
 Clinical Director
 Men's Emergency Shelter
 301-545-5026



Letter from the Coalition Board Chair

Dear Coalition Supporters,

The Broadway play of 1990 “Six Degrees of Separation” gave way to the Will Smith movie of the same name, a 2006 TV show and of course, the Six Degrees of Kevin Bacon game. The concept being that everyone in the world is connected to everyone else through, at the most, six other people.

In 2002, when one of the Board Members for the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless (my Mom’s best friend from grade school – one degree of separation) asked me to consider joining the Board, I was intrigued. The County’s Housing Opportunities Commission, in conjunction with the Coalition, was in the process of purchasing a motel in Gaithersburg for conversion to transitional housing for the homeless. By coincidence, the current owner was a college acquaintance of mine (again, one degree of separation).



Dan Mahoney with his wife Reedy and their children at ShelterWalk ‘n Roll.

Since that time, I have had the privilege of working with the Coalition in the quest to end homelessness in Montgomery County. The Coalition brings together concerned citizens, housing advocates, the area real estate community, business leaders and an incredibly dedicated group of staff to address the issues. The redevelopment of the former motel in Gaithersburg into the Seneca Heights apartments now serves as a national model for the effective collaboration of non-profit organizations, the community and government.

I have also learned about the root causes of homelessness through the Coalition and those we serve. Like many people, I believed that homelessness was an isolated problem in an area like Montgomery County – largely composed of those seeking donations along Rockville Pike and other area roads. It was quite a shock to learn that more than 4,000 people annually experienced homelessness in the County, including more than 1,000 children.

A letter to the editor published in the Gazette newspapers in 2004 suggests “As long as I lump together the abused mother with the alcoholic father and the mentally ill senior, I can only see a defective group that needs to be fixed. But if I dare get up close, observe and listen, then I may see individuals just like me. If I’m very fortunate, pity turns to compassion and I acknowledge we share the same hunger for a meal, a job and a home.”

Addressing the plight of the Homeless begins to be One Degree of Separation.

Please join me in this work,

Dan Mahoney

Dan Mahoney
Board Chair

Volunteer Opportunities

Neighborhood Lunchbox Program



Farmland Elementary School students make bag lunches for the Men's Emergency Shelter.

The Coalition is offering a great volunteer opportunity for groups - the Neighborhood Lunchbox Program, whereby neighborhood groups make a regular schedule to get together and prepare and deliver bag lunches or hot meals to our Men's Emergency Shelter (MES). The MES provides overnight refuge to approximately 60 homeless men in the summer and 160 in the winter. Thanks to the generosity of our volunteers, the men receive frequent breakfast, lunch and dinner donations; however, more regular food donations are required to meet the needs of the shelter residents.

Students, congregants, neighbors, families and friends are encouraged to start their own Neighborhood Lunchbox project. Volunteers form their own groups and divvy up amongst themselves the jobs of grocery shopping, preparing and

delivering the meals. This activity is a great way to get more acquainted with your neighbors while giving back to your community. As an added bonus, you can claim your charitable food donations as a tax deduction at the end of the year!

Give Back This Holiday Season

This year, rather than opting for a new necklace for mom or a pair of slippers for grandpa, you could make a donation in their honor to a good cause. This priceless gift would make a real difference in the lives of the homeless in our community, and the Coalition can send your designated honoree a holiday card describing the gift made in their honor and how it will benefit the people we serve.

Safe Havens serves homeless, single adults with mental illness who have been living on the street. Upon request, we can provide you with a "wish list" of items that a Safe Haven client needs and wants this holiday season. The **Men's Emergency Shelter** needs extra help in the winter meeting the needs of its clients and welcomes gifts of toiletries (i.e. disposable razors, shaving cream, and soap) as well as bag lunches and hot meals.

In addition, the **Partnership for Permanent Housing** and **Seneca Heights Apartments** both appreciate donations of gift cards to allow parents to purchase gifts for their children and be active participants in making the holidays special for their own families. You can also help both programs by providing underprivileged families a photo kit to capture their precious memories – kits often include a photo album, disposable cameras, a gift card to a photo processing shop, and scrapbook materials. Cookie kits are welcomed, too, and can include baking sheets, cooking spray, sprinkles, batter ingredients, cookie cutters, colorful holiday cookie tins, and even your favorite family recipe. The sky's the limit!



If you are interested in these volunteer opportunities, please contact Jenny Willard at 301-217-0314 x16 or jenny@mcch.net

Save the Date for MCCH's Inaugural Gala



CELEBRATING PARTNERSHIPS:

HONORING SHARAN LONDON'S 10 YEARS OF SERVICE

Benefiting the recently established Endowment to End Homelessness

Thursday, February 1, 2007

Bethesda North Marriott Hotel & Conference Center

Reception, 6:30 pm

Dinner & Program, 7:30 pm

\$125 per person

\$1250 for a table of 10

Underwriting Sponsors:

Greenhill Capital Corporation and Leonard A. and Linda K. Greenberg Charitable Foundation
Porten Homes and the Porten Family Foundation

Champion Sponsor:

Aris and Marianne Mardirossian

Sponsorship packages are still available at the following levels:

Champion - \$15,000

Advocate - \$10,000

Partner - \$5,000

Supporter - \$2,500

Friend - \$1,000

Please contact our office at 301-217-0314 or www.mcch.net for more information.

Client Becomes the PPH Newsletter Editor

Sharida Gaines entered the Partnership for Permanent Housing program with her son, and later on a daughter, in December 2003 directly from a homeless shelter. Although Sharida had overcome various obstacles in her life, she faced many more difficulties including domestic violence that led her to relocate from her hometown to Maryland. She has made great headway in the program. Today, she is actively involved with PPH as the Editor to the PPH newsletter as well as developing activities that aim to increase and strengthen relationships within PPH families. Sharida's writing and research skills are very impressive, and she has proved to be an incredible asset to PPH. She is also employed with AmeriCorps VISTA as an Event Planner/Community Outreach Coordinator. Thank you, Sharida, for sharing your creativity and talent with the Coalition team!



Support the Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless:
Participate in Fannie Mae's 19th Annual
Help the Homeless Walkathon!



Exercise your good will and join the fight to end homelessness

WHEN: Saturday November 18, 2006

WHERE: On the National Mall between 4th & 7th Streets NW. Join MCCH staff, clients and supporters and meet us between 8 and 9 AM at the "M" sign.

HOW: To join Team MCCH, you can register on-line at: www.helpthehomeless.kintera.org/MCCH.

METRO: Smithsonian Station (Orange/Blue Lines)

The *Help the Homeless Walkathon* raises funds and awareness to help prevent and end homelessness in the Washington, D.C. area. Join thousands of MCCH staff, clients, family, friends, supporters and other walkers in the fight against homelessness!

Remember, all registration fees go directly to MCCH, and each walker counts toward our goal of earning the \$25,000 incentive for having 1,250 walkers. Don't forget to select MCCH as your beneficiary organization!



**Fannie Mae
Foundation**



The Coalition thanks the following donors for their generous contributions since the last newsletter.

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 Bethesda United Church of Christ
 Damascus United Methodist Church
 Kensington Baptist Church
 New Hope Presbyterian Church
 Our Lady of Grace Church
 St. Francis Episcopal Church
 St. Rose of Lima Catholic Church

In Honor Of

William Pearce Brueckmann by Michael and Ann Pupjak.
 Her mother by Regina Phair.
 Matthew and Noelle Heyman's anniversary.
 Steve Hoskam by Henny van Gogh.
 Sharan London for her 10 years of service to the Coalition
 by Paul Goldman.
 Sara Peterson for her Bat Mitzvah by Harry and Judith
 Gewertz, and Merle and Peal Glick.
 The birth of Sydney Elizabeth Payne by Stephen and Jennie
 Lane, and Jonathan and Julie Maltzman.
 The 6th grade class of the Congregation Beth El Religious
 School by Cheryl Kreiser.

In Memory Of

Helen Cecil by Joni Henderson.
 Wayne Fenton by Sharan London.
 Catherine Forman by Alice Forman.
 Steve Hafey by James Hafey.
 Alice Helm by Lewis Helm.
 Carol Jordon's father by Sharan London.
 Richard R. Kelly by A. Joseph and Anna Froio, Sharan
 London, and the US Department of Transportation.
 Deane M. Sherman by John Sherman.
 Gian Singh by Kabir Singh.



Come walk with us!

Saturday, November 18th, 2006

The National Mall

www.helpthehomeless.kintera.org/MCCH

Designate "MCCH" as your beneficiary organization!

Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless
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