

# Safety~Net

November 2010

## The City of Bloomington: Housing Assistance

By Mark Kruzan, Mayor of Bloomington

The City of Bloomington is committed to providing a high level of service and assistance to residents. One topic that is always deserving of this assistance is housing.

### How the City's Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department helps

Having a safe, secure place to live is essential to a high quality of life. The City's Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department has many resources that can help people buy, maintain and improve their own home.

The Department's Home Buyers Club is designed to help first-time home buyers understand and overcome the obstacles involved in purchasing their first home and learn what to expect after buying a home. The two-session class also examines

home maintenance, credit issues and credit repair.

Participants are given the opportunity to meet one-on-one with a housing counselor to discuss any potential obstacles to achieving their goal of home ownership. Income-eligible graduates may qualify for up to \$5,000 in down-payment and closing-cost assistance from HAND.

HAND also makes great efforts to assist low-income residents through various financial and legislative programs. The Housing Trust Fund Advisory Board, a citizen board coordinated by HAND, makes recommendations for loans from the Housing Trust Fund Endowment, which aims to create and preserve affordable housing for low-income citizens.

The Small and Simple grant program is another way HAND helps local residents throughout the year. This program pro-

vides grant money for small community-building projects that demonstrate a neighborhood benefit. Eligible projects include physical improvements, such as building a community sign or adding waste receptacles, and one-time events such as hosting a special celebration, training sessions or educational campaigns.

HAND also provides considerable resources beyond its own programming. One such resource is the Indiana Grant HANDBOOK, a document compiled by HAND and the City of Bloomington Community and Family Resources Department that contains information about state and local grant opportunities. These grants provide financial assistance for a multitude of initiatives, including housing improvement. Citizens interested pursuing funding through these programs can seek more

See "Mayor", page 3

## November is National Youth Homelessness Awareness Month

By Warren A. Wade II, Assistant Director, Stepping Stones

### The numbers of homeless youth

Research suggests that, at any given point, there are over 1 million children and youth experiencing homelessness in the U.S. Closer to home, the Indiana Department of Education recently surveyed the youth in the schools. From this survey, the DoE identified over 9,000 children and youth that were homeless. And these are just youth in the public education system. It does not include private, charter or not-in-school homeless youth. As a part of this state-wide survey, our own Monroe County Community Schools Corporation identified over 200 children and youth that were homeless.

### How do youth become homeless?

There are various, often inter-related

See "Youth", page two

## Muchos recursos disponibles para los residentes a través del Vivienda y Vecindarios de la Ciudad para el Desarrollo (HAND como sus siglas en Inglés) de la Ciudad de Bloomington

Por Mark Kruzan, Alcalde de Bloomington

La Ciudad de Bloomington se compromete a proporcionar un alto nivel de servicio y asistencia a los residentes. Un tema que siempre es merecedor de esta ayuda es la vivienda.

Tener un lugar seguro para vivir es esencial para una alta calidad de vida. Vivienda y Vecindarios de la Ciudad para el Desarrollo (HAND como sus siglas en Inglés) Departamento tiene muchos recursos que pueden ayudar a la gente a comprar, mantener y mejorar su propia casa.

El club de compradores del departamento está diseñado para ayudar a los compradores de vivienda que lo harán por primera vez, a comprender y superar los obstáculos que

impone la compra de su primera casa y saber qué esperar después de comprar una casa. Se imparte una clase dos sesiones y que examina también el mantenimiento del hogar, problemas de crédito y de reparación de crédito.

Los participantes tienen la oportunidad de conocer uno-a-uno con un consejero de vivienda para analizar los obstáculos posibles para lograr su meta de tener su casa propia. Aquellos que tienen ingresos elegibles pueden calificar para recibir hasta \$ 5,000 en el pago inicial y la asistencia de cierre costo de HAND.

Ver "Alcalde," pg. 3

### Bridges To Somewhere: People Helping People

Safety-Net is a free, volunteer-driven community publication that is published once every three months and is sponsored by the South Central Community Action Program (SCCAP). Its mission is two-fold. Part of the mission is to educate community members about programs available that help individuals and families to enrich their lives. And a second part of the mission is to make positive connections between those in our community who have resources, and those who do not. The ultimate goal is to encourage everyone to participate in making Bloomington a special community that links everyone together.

A big "thank you" to all of you who encourage the publication of Safety-Net by contributing articles that make Safety-Net possible. Each issue features the many agencies,

as well as City and County programs that reach out to people and offer much needed community services. There are also writings and poems from individuals who have benefitted from these programs. At the end of the publication there is an extensive Agency Guide that enables individuals to locate appropriate resources.

Comments from readers are most welcome. Please address them to the editor, white@indiana.edu as well as the assistant editor 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. Past issues of Safety-Net are available at the Safety-Net website, <http://safety-net-news-paper.com/>.



Editorial Cartoon by Joe Lee

## YOUTH

Continued from page 1

scenarios in which a youth can become homeless and, while this is in no way exhaustive, these scenarios often fall under these three categories: family and/or economic problems and residential stability. If there is physical, sexual or substance abuse problems (like addiction of a family member) in the home, strained relationships, or general neglect, a youth may choose to leave home and become homeless. Some youth become homeless because their families have suffered an economic crisis like loss of a job, illness of a guardian, or lack of housing options. Or, if a youth lacks residential stability and has been in and out of various housing situations, homelessness may result.

### Who are the homeless youth and what are their characteristics?

According to advocacy group Youth Noise, there are 4 “types” of homeless youth: Runaways, Episodic, Unaccompanied, and Street-Dependent. They are more likely to experience depression, to use substance and over half of them will drop out of school even though almost 80% attended school regularly before becoming homeless. They lack the skills that are essential to living self-sufficiently like financial literacy, substance usage awareness, or healthy lifestyle choices. Older youth often have limited to no financial resources, have limited to no employment history and a lack of residential history. This maelstrom causes youth to experience and remain homeless.

### Local agencies that help homeless youth

There are various organizations throughout the Bloomington and Monroe County area that respond to the needs of this population. For younger youth experiencing homelessness, the Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County can provide safe, temporary emergency shelter, foster healthy and positive youth development, and provide support and structure to families in crisis. Middle Way House provides children care, children and youth programming and mentoring opportunities for domestic violence victims and their children. Agencies like Big Brothers, Big Sisters, Boys and Girls Club and Girl's Inc. provide services to children and families that help prevent children and youth homelessness from occurring like providing mentoring relationships and opportunities for youth that will benefit them and their families in the future.

### What Stepping Stones provides

Stepping Stones provides transitional housing and supportive services to youth between the ages of 16-20 that are experiencing homelessness. We provide them with a safe, furnished apartment that they share with 2 other residents. While in our program they also receive various supportive services like educational and vocational support and planning. We also facilitate mental and physical medical services as most of our youth struggle with some mental health issue and have no primary care provider. We provide these youth the opportunity to stay in school, obtain employment, and develop the necessary skills to live independently beyond our program.

While we and the other organizations mentioned are able to address the needs of some of the homeless youth and children in Bloomington and Monroe County, the need remains and is expected to grow. On average, Stepping Stones receives two

calls a week from or on behalf of a youth in need of housing.

We and other organizations need your help. Here are a couple of ways to get involved:

- Become a donor – Financially supporting our missions can help provide opportunities for youth currently experiencing homelessness. Those same economic conditions which can lead to a youth experiencing homelessness (like economic downturn or the loss of industry and jobs) can also affect an agency and its fundraising efforts.

- Become a volunteer – with limited resources, these nonprofit organizations are able to do amazing things with the support of volunteers. Do you have any skill that you could lend to an agency? Check out their websites for volunteer opportunities and needs.

- Become informed – If you are familiar with the agencies in your community, you can provide the information to intervene and possibly prevent an episode of homelessness.

The Bloomington community is special. It possesses a rare empathy for its down-trodden citizens, responds with care, and fosters hope in the lives of children. So, during this holiday season, keep homeless youth in mind.

### Stepping Stones

(812) 339-9771

fax: (812) 339-2991

[wwade@steppingstones-inc.org](mailto:wwade@steppingstones-inc.org)

[www.steppingstones-inc.org](http://www.steppingstones-inc.org)

## Project Safe Place: Helping youth in crisis or at risk

By Vanessa Schmidt, Safe Place Coordinator,  
Youth Services Bureau  
615 S. Adams St. • Bloomington, Indiana  
(812)-349-2506 • [www.youthservicesbureau.net](http://www.youthservicesbureau.net)

School is back in session and Project Safe Place is out to reach more students and community members than ever before. Since June 2010, Safe Place has been able to reach over 4115 youth and 1325 adults. In addition to participating in local community events over the summer, local Project Safe Place was able to launch a Text 4 Help commercial in both AMC theaters before every movie shown and in the concession stand lobbies. The Text 4 Help project uses technology to quickly offer teens information about the closest location where they can get immediate help and safety. Youth in crisis can text the word SAFE and their current location to the number 69866 and they will receive an address of the nearest Safe Place site and contact number for the local youth shelter. In cities that don't have a Safe

Place program, the youth will receive the name and number of the youth shelter or, if there is no local shelter, the National Runaway Switchboard Hotline Number (1-800-RUNAWAY).

Project Safe Place will also be conducting presentations in Monroe, Owen, and Greene County schools throughout the year to increase awareness among youth, teachers and parents about the Safe Place program and its resources. The program will also be participating in upcoming events and activities such as National Runaway Prevention Month, National Safe Place Week, Homeward Bound, Celebration of Families, and National Night Out. If you would like any more information or are interested in volunteering for Project Safe Place, please contact Vanessa Schmidt at Youth Services Bureau, 812-349-2507.

## About Safety~Net

David White  
Editor-in-Chief

Doug Wilson  
Assistant Editor

Joe Lee  
Editorial Cartoonist

### SPECIAL SECTIONS

The special sections in this issue are: **Voices, Agency Reports, Volunteer Opportunities, Youth Programs, Agency Guide, SCCAP, Public Comment Therapeutic Jail Programs.**

### 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.

**WE WELCOME COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS.** Please send these to the editor at [white@indiana.edu](mailto:white@indiana.edu). Sign your name, and indicate whether you would like for your comments to be published.

## MAYOR

Continued from page 1

information from HAND.

Housing isn't just about homeownership. HAND acts as the ambassadors for neighborhoods by requiring that all rental units be registered with the HAND Department and inspected for compliance with the housing code, Title 16. Having a rental code encourages properly maintained rental units, which are integral to the composition of most Bloomington neighborhoods and help maintain neighborhood values. While most rental units in Bloomington are for students, Title 16 is very important for lower income citizens who have fewer choices. Every tenant deserves a habitable place to live and in Bloomington we work hard to ensure that they have it. This year the HAND Department will inspect about 8,000 rental units.

### Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) administered by HAND

Another initiative administered by HAND is the Community Development Block Grants (CDBG). These funds are allocated annually by the Citizen Advisory Council. Applications are available in the fall of every year and allocation recommendations are made in January and finalized by the City Council in early spring. HOME Investment Partnership funding is for housing projects only, and applications are accepted on an ongoing basis. I encourage everyone to contact the HAND office to learn more about these annual programs.

Home ownership helps create stable families and gives individuals a sense of pride in their community. With homeownership, however, comes maintenance. A well-maintained home keeps neighborhoods pleasant and motivates community members to keep their own property in the best shape possible. HAND understands that sometimes unexpected accidents or natural disasters happen and homeowners may not have the funds available to do the necessary repairs. Because of this, HAND distributes yearly grants of up to \$7,500 for emergency home repairs. Eligible households must have income within current HUD guidelines and must be located within city limits.

I would encourage anyone who is interested in buying a home, maintaining their home or is struggling to make payments on their home to contact the HAND Department and learn more about other and other programs not mentioned in this article. With the primary goal of improving housing in Bloomington, the Department never hesitates to help individuals in any way they can. Shelter is one of the fundamental necessities of life, and I am pleased to have such an enthusiastic staff that takes so seriously the job they've been given.

# Reducing Stress During the Busy Holiday Season

By Beverly Calender-Anderson, City of Bloomington Safe and Civil City Director

As the fall and winter holidays approach, many of us are beginning to think about the endless shopping, cooking, eating and hours of football that are ahead of us. The holiday season can be a time of joy, cheer and family gatherings. For many people though, it is a time of loneliness and anxiety. Many factors can cause the "blues" during the holidays – unrealistic expectations, stress, fatigue, loss of a loved one, financial constraints, the inability to be with family and friends. If people are lacking basic needs like food, shelter or adequate clothing their reality is even more pronounced during the holidays. When stress is at its peak, it's difficult to stop and regroup. One strategy is to try to prevent stress and depression in the first place, especially if the holidays have taken an emotional toll in the past.

The Mayo Clinic offers the following tips for coping with stress and depression during the holidays:

- Acknowledge your feelings: If you have lost a loved one or can't be with family during the holidays, realize that it's okay to feel sadness and grief. Take time to express your feelings;
- Reach out: Seek out community, reli-

gious or other social events. They can offer support and companionship;

- Be realistic: The holidays don't have to be perfect. As families change and grow, traditions and rituals often change as well. Choose a few to hold on to and be open to creating new ones;

- Set aside differences: Try to accept family members and friends as they are, even if they don't live up to your expectations;

- Stick to a budget: Before going gift or food shopping, decide how much you can afford to spend and stick to it. You can't buy happiness with an avalanche of gifts;

- Plan ahead: Set aside specific days for shopping, cooking, volunteering or visiting friends. Be sure to line up help with those tasks that you can't complete alone;

- Learn to say no: Saying yes when you should say no can leave you feeling resentful and overwhelmed;

- Don't abandon healthy habits: Overindulgence only adds to your stress and guilt. Remember to exercise and eat healthy snacks;

- Take a breather: Make some time for yourself. Spending just 15 minutes alone, without distraction, may refresh you enough to handle what you need to do;

- Seek help if you need it: Talk to a trusted friend, clergy person or mental health professional. If you are in crisis, you can call Centerstone Crisis Intervention Hotline at 1-800-681-7444 or the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 1-800-273-TALK. Both hotlines are available 24/7. You don't have to go through it alone.

Many people find that the best way to cope with holiday depression is by reaching out to others. Bloomington is a city of great compassion and if you are looking for ways to reach out to others during the holidays, there is plenty of opportunity for you.

- The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network will publish the Holiday Wish List in the Herald-Times on the Friday following Thanksgiving. This list will include needs of agencies and organizations in the City. There is something for every budget.

- The Community Kitchen and Shalom Center are wonderful places to go and help prepare and serve food or be a companion to one of the guests during meal time.

- For an updated listing of volunteer opportunities and holiday needs check [www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer).

## ALCALDE

Continúa de la pg. 1

HAND también hace un gran esfuerzo para ayudar a los residentes de bajos ingresos a través de diversos programas financieros y legislativos. El Fondo Fiduciario de Vivienda Consejo Consultivo, un órgano ciudadano coordinado por HAND, hace recomendaciones a los préstamos del Fondo Fiduciario de Vivienda Fundación, cuyo objetivo es crear y preservar viviendas accesibles para los ciudadanos de bajos ingresos.

El programa de donaciones pequeñas y sencillas es otra forma de hand para ayuda a los residentes locales durante todo el año. Este programa proporciona dinero de la subvención para la construcción de pequeños proyectos comunitarios que demuestran un beneficio al barrio. Los proyectos elegibles incluyen mejoras físicas, como la construcción de una señal de la comunidad o la ubicación de los recipientes para desperdicios basureros, y aquellos eventos que ocurren una sola vez como anfitrión de una celebración especial, sesiones de formación o campañas educativas.

HAND también proporciona importantes recursos más allá de su propia programación. Uno de estos recursos es el manual de subvención de Indiana, un documento elaborado por hand y la Ciudad de Bloomington Departamento de Recursos para Comunidad y la Familia el cual contiene información sobre oportunidades de becas estatales y locales. Estos subsidios brindan

asistencia financiera para una multiplicidad de iniciativas, incluida la mejoría de la vivienda. Los ciudadanos interesados a obtener la financiación a través de estos programas pueden buscar más información en HAND.

El Departamento HAND ofrece algo más que recursos para ayudar a las personas a comprar una vivienda - El personal ha diseñado iniciativas para ayudar a mantenerlas. La División de la Consejería de Vivienda HAND ofrece asesoramiento por defecto de hipoteca inversa y el asesoramiento de hipotecas a propietarios de viviendas en peligro de ejecución hipotecaria de su casa. Aunque este programa no proporciona ayuda financiera, prevé a los propietarios de viviendas con un consejero con experiencia de HAND que les ayudará a trabajar con su compañía hipotecaria hacia una solución adecuada.

Otra iniciativa administrada por HAND es el Desarrollo Comunitario Block Grants (CDBG por sus siglas en Inglés). Estos fondos son asignados anualmente por el Asesor del Consejo Ciudadano. Las solicitudes están disponibles en el otoño de cada año y las recomendaciones de la asignación se hace en enero y se finaliza por el Ayuntamiento a principios de primavera. HOME Investment Partnership es la financiación de proyectos de vivienda única, y las solicitudes se aceptan de forma continua. Animamos a todos a contactar a la oficina de HAND para aprender más acerca de

estos programas anuales.

Propiedad de la vivienda ayuda a crear familias estables y da a los individuos un sentimiento de orgullo en su comunidad. Con la propiedad de vivienda, sin embargo, viene de mantenimiento. Una casa en buen estado mantiene barrios agradable y motiva a los miembros de la comunidad para mantener su propiedad en la mejor forma posible. HAND entiende que a veces los accidentes imprevistos o desastres naturales suceden y los propietarios no pueden tener los fondos disponibles para hacer las reparaciones necesarias. Debido a esto, HAND distribuye las subvenciones anuales de hasta \$ 7,500 para reparaciones en el hogar de emergencia. Las familias elegibles deben tener un ingreso dentro de las actuales directrices de HUD y debe estar ubicado dentro de los límites de la ciudad.

Animamos a cualquiera que esté interesado en comprar una casa, el mantenimiento de su casa o tiene dificultades para hacer los pagos de su casa para contactar con el Departamento HAND y aprender más acerca de estos y otros programas incluso otros no mencionados en este artículo. Con el objetivo principal de mejorar la vivienda en Bloomington, el Departamento no duda en ayudar a las personas en todo lo que puedan. La vivienda es una de las necesidades fundamentales de la vida, y me alegro de tener un personal entusiasta que toma tan en serio el trabajo hacen.

# Jail Video Visitation: Easing And Expanding The Visitation Process

By Colonel Bill Wilson, Jail Commander at Monroe County Jail

The Monroe County Jail is initiating video visitation. Video visitation allows inmates to converse with visitors in a secured area with increased privacy. Inmates communicate from secure stations inside the jail with visitors in conveniently located visitation stations. Using video visitation technology, any inmate station can be immediately connected with a visitor station.

This cost-effective alternative to the current visitation program will benefit the jail, inmates and the community. For the jail, it means more productive use of staff time. Staff will no longer be pulled from their posts to escort inmates to the visitation area. Video stations will be placed directly in the housing area, and less time in transporting inmates to and from the visitation area means fewer potential fights and less conflict with employees. Video visitation provides a reduced risk of drugs and other contraband traffic, which is a concern even with barrier visits.

For inmates, the system provides an opportunity for extended visitations. Currently inmates can receive up to sixty (60) minutes of visitation per week. Using video visitation, the amount of visitation time will increase to one hundred and thirty five (135) minutes per week or over 125%. In addition, inmates will be able to schedule visits in advance, knowing both the starting and ending time of their scheduled visits. Time available for visitation will be increased to accommodate working and out of town friends and family. Additionally, visits can be scheduled with younger children in mind to better accommodate school schedules and activities.

Inmates who have the service of the public defenders office will also benefit from video visitation. Plans have included a remote control station placed within the public defenders office. This remote station will allow the public defenders office to control the unit during scheduled interview times providing both confidentiality and privacy.

For visitors, it provides a much simpler and accessible visitation process. Because time is not wasted transporting inmates back and forth — time in which the old glass-partitioned booth was unoccupied — inmates and their visitors can spend more time conversing, less time waiting. Visitors will arrive for their pre-arranged visit, check in with staff and proceed to their visitation area. No longer will visitors have to crowd into the lobby and wait for

their visitation time. The visiting area will be increased from six (6) to twenty (20) positions.

While some people initially complain the lack of face-to-face visits will tear families apart and, in the end, make it difficult for inmates to readjust to society because of the lack of face-to-face visits, other visitors who feel obligated to visit will welcome this layer of distance. It enables them to honor their commitment and not have to go through the physical and emotional hassle of registering and waiting. As a result, several jurisdictions have reported that because of the convenience of video visitation an increase in the number of visitors has been reported. Future advances in technology and infrastructure may allow for family members, using a web based application, to visit from the privacy of their own home or other remote sites within the community. Existing infrastructure may allow for additional plans to allow a direct link from the MCCC to the Indiana Department of Correction.

By easing and expanding the visitation process, the video visitation experience may lessen the documented tolls often experienced by visitors, avoid the numerous problems associated with visits, and reduce necessary manpower allocations.

## AIDS Memorial Quilt display fosters awareness of HIV and AIDS

By Anna Saraceno, member of Community AIDS Action Group

### Location and events

Sections of the internationally celebrated AIDS Memorial Quilt – a 54-ton, handmade tapestry commemorating more than 91,000 lives lost to AIDS – will be on display November 11-15 at Alumni Hall in the Indiana University Indiana Memorial Union, Bloomington. The 520-panel exhibit will be the largest AIDS Memorial Quilt display in Indiana history. Related events include performances by Kaia, the Bloomington Peace Choir, Voces Novae, Quarryland Men's Chorus, and the African American Choral Ensemble; multiple screenings of Common Threads, a documentary about the Quilt; community quilting bees; and closing remarks from Mayor Kruzan. Visit [www.thecaag.org](http://www.thecaag.org) for more information. All events are free and open to the public.

### Schedule

The exhibit will be open during the following hours: Thursday, November 11, 6pm - 9:30pm; opening ceremony at 6pm Friday, November 12, 10am - 9pm Saturday, November 13, 10am - 9pm Sunday, November 14, 11am - 7pm Monday, November 15, 10am - 4pm;

closing ceremony at 4pm Presented by the Community AIDS Action Group (CAAG) of South Central Indiana, The Names Project, and Union Board.

### History and significance of the AIDS Memorial Quilt

The AIDS Memorial Quilt began with a single panel created in San Francisco in 1987. The Quilt is now composed of more than 47,000 panels, each one commemorating the life of someone who has died from an AIDS-related illness.

These panels come from every state in the nation and every corner of the globe, and have been sewn by friends, lovers, and family members into this epic memorial – the largest piece of ongoing community art in the world. In a war against a disease that has no cure, the AIDS Memorial Quilt helps make HIV and AIDS issues real, human, and immediate. By revealing the humanity behind the statistics, the Quilt helps teach compassion, overcomes taboo, battles stigmas and phobias, and inspires individuals to take direct responsibility for their own well-being and that of their family, friends, and community.

**Community AIDS  
Action Group**  
[www.thecaag.org](http://www.thecaag.org)

## Video Visitation at the Monroe County Jail

By Mark Stoops, Monroe County Commissioner

I don't think anybody can argue that face-to-face, personal interaction isn't the best option for family and friends visiting inmates at the jail. The logistics of how to make that happen, efficiently and with as little stress as possible for all parties concerned, is the difficult part when resources (especially available space and staff) are stretched past their limits.

Currently visitors are forced to wait for hours and hours in the lobby and the alley behind the Justice Building, past midnight and even later, for the chance for a short visit in a highly regulated environment. Many people, especially spouses with small children, just choose not to go.

Video visitation allows us to greatly expand flexible opportunities to visit that make it easier on anyone trying to negotiate work and school sched-

ules. And of course, the important part, far less time waiting to visit, much longer time slots to visit, more often, in a low stress environment.

The alternative to video visitation, expanding the current face-to-face opportunities, would require a large increase in jail staff. Although the upfront cost of installing the new system is expensive, it is dwarfed by the on-going expense of new staff in an already understaffed jail.

The other alternative is to build a new 500 bed jail, but rather than choose to just warehouse more people, the Monroe County Commissioners and Council are committed to using available funding to create alternatives to incarceration. A Transition/Work Release Center, for instance, could pull as many as 100 people out of our jail, placing them

in a facility that is heavily focused on intensive treatment programs in a setting where secure visitation is not an issue.

We estimate that the Transition Center would require 5 full time staff (that translates to 15 staff positions for a 24 hour facility, 7 days a week). By carefully marshalling our resources we can save up for those positions and make this Center a reality.

Most of the people in our jail have been there an AVERAGE of 9 times already. Of course, by reducing the number of repeat offenders, we reduce the amount of crime in our community. To change behaviors, we need to invest in treatment options that help change the tendency to make bad choices, and to teach the real value of being able to visit family and friends *outside of jail*.



# Community Development Block Grant

By Lisa Abbott, Director of the City of Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development Department (HAND)

Every year, the City of Bloomington makes available to nonprofit organizations and City Departments funding through the Community Development Block Grant process. These funds are used to create opportunities for people in Bloomington to better their lives. Since 1974, the City has invested more than \$25 million in projects to improve the community. This includes funding for housing programs such as Owner-Occupied Rehab or the Emergency Home Repair Grant. It includes funding to cover operating costs for programs such as the Community Kitchen's free meals program or Middle Way House's domestic violence shelter program. It is used to create important alternative transportation pathways such as the new multipurpose path along Country Club Drive.

Since 1984, more than 70% of the social service funding has been granted to

agencies that provide emergency services. The City has provided funding through the physical improvements fund to make improvements at the Bloomington Housing Authority, help with emergency home repairs, and provide renovation assistance to agencies such as Centerstone, Amethyst House and Monroe County United Ministries.

In a time when individuals around the country want more say in their government, the residents of Bloomington have always directed this funding source. Bloomington's Community Development Block Grant funds are allocated by a citizen group called the CDBG Citizen Advisory Council (CAC). Applications are accepted every summer to fill vacancies on this council. The CAC reads the applications, scores them and makes funding allocation recommendations. Throughout

the history of CDBG, the approving bodies have always held up the allocation recommendations of the CAC. This funding is allocated by the public for the public good.

The agencies appear at a public hearing to answer questions about their applications. These hearings are open to the public and often broadcasted on CATS. For this fiscal year, the physical improvement hearing will be held on January 6 and the social service hearing on January 11. These hearings provide a wonderful opportunity to learn more about upcoming projects and programs that will benefit the members of our community.

The allocation recommendations from the CAC are approved by the Redevelopment Commission, the Mayor and the City Council. The Council meetings are also open to the public and broadcasted on CATS.



This year, we will again have to make hard decisions about funding from a collection of applications outlining exciting and needed projects and programs. This is a great opportunity for you, the public, to help make a difference in the lives of the people who live in our community. For more information about the CDBG process, visit [www.bloomington.in.gov/hand](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/hand).

## Special Section: Public Comment

### Family and Friends of People Incarcerated Speak Out

*A report from UU Friends of Prisoners Task Force—Glenda Breeden, facilitator*

Members and friends of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Bloomington care deeply about social justice issues in our community and around the world. We have several social justice task forces that actively work to bring about change—the Friends of Prisoners Task Force (F.O.P) is one of these groups. Our purposes and goals are to raise awareness of the issue of mass incarceration in our society and to affirm the worth and dignity of those in jail or prison, and their families, in Bloomington and the larger community.

We recently heard about the plans for a new video visitation system at the Monroe County Jail (MCJ) that removes virtually all personal contact between inmates and their visitors. Keep in mind that the majority of these people are nonviolent offenders, and that 70 – 80% of them are awaiting trial; they haven't been convicted, but they cannot afford bail plus cash bond. The vast majority of these men and women have family members and/or friends who love them and want to support them.

F.O.P. (along with members of Catholic Charities, Monroe County Religious Leaders, and Citizens for Effective Justice, among others) attended a meeting recently

that Decarcerate Monroe County (DMC) called to share information and to discuss the ramifications of the planned video visitation system. DMC members routinely go to the jail on visitation days to talk with family and friends of people incarcerated, and, with the support of WFHB, they recorded visitors' opinions as to how they felt about the changes that were in the works. It is important to give voice to those who often have no voice in our community, therefore we offer a few direct quotes from those interviews:

JV1 (Jail Visitor 1): How are you supposed to stay connected through a TV screen? Honestly, I mean through a glass is bad enough but at least you're somewhat close while if you're just on a TV, it's ridiculous.

JV2: In some aspects it will be an asset because, like they said, it will reduce the number of turnkey operations needed at the jail for accommodating visitation. This concept has been employed in many institutions throughout the county and the country.

JV3: [It] makes absolutely no sense to me at all. What?—to save money? ... We pay taxes for [the jail]—there should

be something we have and that's the right to see the people we love—not through a video screen but through face to face interaction.

JV4: I think it's terrible because families need to see their family member. Yes, they need visitors... Like the person I have in there... you can't get out because you can't get up that much money. I know it's wrong for them to get in here but they still need to have visitors.

JV5: People want to come here and see their loved one... they don't want to have to sit there and see them through a screen. I understand they're probably gonna say, "Well, you know what, your loved one probably shouldn't have gotten themselves in here." Well, you know what? Sometimes it's just not that easy. You know? If you're in here, you're in here, it's not anybody else's fault... it's not the jail's fault, but everybody has rights and they're just taking rights away.

JV6: If they want them to be rehabilitated and helped then I feel like they should allow their family members to come in... if they are able to see their family members and to feel that they're loved and that someone's thinking about them,

it empowers them and encourages them to do better and get their lives together and get out.

JV7: I'd take the visits that they have now where you can see them through a glass window. Or even get a room with tables like they have at the department of corrections where you can actually give your visitor a hug or something.

JV8: I don't like the idea of the video at all. I bring my children up here and I think it would be really hard on them, too.

There are some positive aspects in changing over to video visitation such as longer visitation times and easier access for public defenders. However, loved ones will still have to travel to Bloomington to access these computers; and the people incarcerated will lack privacy for their computer visits. Personally, I liked JV7's suggestion—provide a visiting room like they have at the state prisons so that family and friends can give their loved one a hug and sit and visit with them in a way that honors the dignity of both the incarcerated person and his/her loved ones.

# New Spaces and Services at Monroe County Public Library

By Margaret Harter, Community Relations, Monroe County Public Library (MCPL)

## OUR MISSION OF SERVICE

Monroe County Public Library's mission is to enrich individual lives and strengthen our community by offering equitable access to information and opportunities for literacy, learning, and enjoyment

## LIBRARY RENOVATION

On October 3, the Monroe County Public Library celebrated the completion of the 2009-2010 renovation of its downtown facility on Kirkwood Avenue. The Board and staff encourage everyone to stop in and discover all that's new and improved at MCPL, from new spaces to more convenient services.

## NEW SPACES and SERVICES

The new magazine area overlooking Kirkwood offers patrons a lovely space to relax and enjoy the view while reading a favorite newspaper or magazine. Self-pickup of holds lets busy patrons pick up their reserved items, check them out using Express Check, and go quickly on their way. Patrons also can choose to pick up their holds at the new Drive-up window in the Library Parking Lot. The Drive-up is open all hours that the library is open.

## VITAL and the VITAL/JOB SEARCH RESOURCES ROOM

Expanded tutoring rooms in VITAL (Volunteers in Tutoring Adult Learners) allow more flexibility for tutors and learners to work together and for small-group ESL tutoring. The winter session of ESL Conversation Practice Groups starts in January.

The VITAL and Job Search Resources Room (next door to the VITAL Office on the second floor of the library) has been opened up to increase its visibility and to encourage use of the room's resources by all library patrons.

Job seekers are not limited to the hours the library is open to explore resources, make connections, and find help. The library's Job Search Web pages—[www.mcpl.info/jobsearch](http://www.mcpl.info/jobsearch)—offer a one-stop link to a wide variety of resources.

Job seekers can:

- study for job exams online

- look through job Listings of area employers
- find resources for preparing resumes and cover letters
- get interview tips
- see what local training opportunities are available
- make use of Indiana Career Connect: the #1 source for job openings in Indiana
- learn about local assistance for shelter, food, child care, medicine, transportation

## EXPRESS COMPUTER CLASSES

Many library patrons do not have computer access at home. Our public Internet computers are used heavily (more than 24,000 sessions a month in 2009).

Much of our modern world has gone digital: everything from job applications to applying for social security and unemployment benefits. MCPL offers more than fifty Internet computers for public use. A large number of our computer patrons are new users without previous training. They need to be able to fill out online applications and attach resumes. Others want to be able to stay in touch with family and friends. To help new computer users and those needing to brush up on their skills, the library is offering Express Computer Classes—one-stop, one-hour classes.

These free classes offer hands-on introduction to email, Word 2007, and computer basics. Participants can learn the basics of using a mouse, getting online, setting up an email account, and writing documents. They may sign up for classes as many times as they need in order to feel comfortable utilizing the skills being taught.

Each class is presented seven times from November through January. Find out more, or register, by calling 349-3228 or stopping at the second-floor Information Desk at the library. (See the library's Computer Classes brochure or go to [www.mcpl.info](http://www.mcpl.info) for other classes offered in these areas: Basic Computer Skills, Internet Tools, Social Networking, and Microsoft Office 2007.)



Courtesy photo

## MCPL Calendar Entries

### Classes offered various dates, Dec-Feb.:

- **Express Computer Class: Super Basic Computing** – Dec. 13 (11 a.m.-noon), Jan. 10 (3-4 p.m.), Jan. 20 (11 a.m.-noon), Feb. 7 (3-4 p.m.), Feb. 22 (11 a.m.-noon)
- **Express Computer Class: Basic Word** – Dec. 2 (11 a.m.-noon); Jan. 4 (11 a.m.-noon), Jan. 18 (4-5 p.m.); Feb. 9 (3-4 p.m.), Feb. 23 (11 a.m.-noon), Monroe County Public Library. Call 349-3228 to register or stop by Information Desk.
- **Express Computer Class: Email Basics for Yahoo and Gmail** – Dec. 7 (4-5 p.m.), Jan. 13 (11 a.m.-noon), Jan. 25 (4-5 p.m.); Feb. 1 (11 a.m.-noon); Feb. 15 (4-5 p.m.), Monroe County Public Library. Call 349-3228 to register or stop by Information Desk.

### Dec. 16, Jan. 20, and Feb. 17

- **Job Search @ Your Library: Resume Review and Interview Prep** – 6-8 p.m., Third Thursdays, Dec. 16, Jan. 20, Feb. 17, Monroe County Public Library. Call 349-3228, or stop by the Information Desk.

### Dec. 13, Jan. 10, and Feb. 14

- **New Movie Mondays** – On second Mondays of the month, MCPL shows a new feature film it has received. Free. 6:30 p.m., Dec. 13, Jan. 10, and Feb. 14

### Jan. 3-8

- **ESL Conversation Practice Groups – Sign-up.** Sign up for ESL Conversation Practice in VITAL during library hours, January 3-8. The Winter Session runs from Jan. 9-March 5, VITAL, Monroe County Public Library. Call 349-3173.

### February 26

- **MOSAIC: A Diversity Film Festival.** Short films on poverty, homelessness, disability, and accepting differences. Discussions. Refreshments. 10 a.m.-1 p.m., Saturday, February 26, Rms. 1B/1C, Monroe County Public Library. Presented by Diversity Theater, a program of the City of Bloomington's Community and Family Resources Dept.

### Monroe County Public Library

303 E. Kirkwood Avenue

Bloomington, Indiana

812-349-3050 • [www.mcpl.info](http://www.mcpl.info)

Open Mon-Thu 9-9, Fri 9-6,

Sat 9-5, Sun 1-5

# Free Tax Preparation Service Available

By Amanda Day, Communications Assistant, United Way of Monroe County

Each year Bloomington residents are given the opportunity to benefit from a free tax preparation service provided by IRS-certified volunteers. Last year volunteers with the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program helped file over 600 tax returns in Monroe County. Volunteers also helped many residents claim valuable tax credits such as the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). For the past eight years the VITA/EITC program has served low- to moderate-income residents in the community. This year United Way of Monroe County along with partner organizations will expand the program by opening three new locations.

VITA is a national program sponsored by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) and involves communities throughout the United States. Each year the VITA/EITC program in Bloomington has increased its results and impact in the community.

"The VITA/EITC program in our community has had great success increasing participation over the years, but we know that several million dollars in EITC still go unclaimed in our area," said Barry Lessow, executive director of United Way of Monroe County. "Those funds are critical to

local families and we need to do all we can to bring them back to our community."

For the 2010 tax filing season VITA volunteers helped file 633 federal tax returns at the three community VITA sites in Bloomington. This number is a 29 percent increase from 2009 and a 37 percent increase from 2008. The VITA team hopes

to increase these numbers even more this year with the addition of three new program sites.

Last year VITA sites were located at Ivy Tech Bloomington, the Indiana University Maurer School of Law and the Ellettsville Branch Library. These sites will continue in 2011 and the program will add two additional sites in Bloomington and one new site in Owen County. New Bloomington locations will be at WorkOne-Bloomington and South Central Community Action Pro-

gram. The first VITA site in Owen County will be at the Owen County Public Library in Spencer.

"These additional VITA sites will help more low- to moderate-income people file their taxes for free," Lessow said. "We know that each of the volunteers at the VITA sites will work to insure that every-

*For more information, please visit <http://monroeunitedway.org/eitc> or contact Jessica Mace, United Way's community investment coordinator, at [jessica@monroeunitedway.org](mailto:jessica@monroeunitedway.org) or 812-334-8370.*

one eligible claims the Earned Income Tax Credit."

Roy Elkes, associate accounting professor at Ivy Tech Bloomington, said in these current economic circumstances the Ivy Tech campus supports and recognizes the importance of the VITA/EITC program in the Bloomington community.

"Our expectation is for continued growth," Elkes said.

Ivy Tech Community College in Bloomington is the largest VITA site in the

community. Last year volunteers at the site filed 50 percent more returns than in 2009.

"Last tax season we filed over 500 returns," Elkes said. "We have a reputation for fast and reliable service."

All of the VITA sites are working to increase financial stability in Monroe and Owen Counties. Many organizations are partnering to provide the VITA/EITC program: Area 10 Agency on Aging, City of Bloomington, El Centro Comunal Latino, Ellettsville Branch Library, Indiana University Maurer School of Law, Internal Revenue Service, Ivy Tech Community College, Monroe County Public Library, Owen County Public Library, Retired Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP), South Central Community Action Program, Twin Lakes Recreation Center, United Way of Monroe County, Work One-Bloomington, and 2-1-1. The VITA/EITC program also works with AARP's Tax-Aide Program to serve area residents, which sponsors two tax preparation sites in Bloomington.

"We appreciate the efforts of all the volunteers and site coordinators, and we look forward to making this important service even more accessible this year," Lessow said.

## The Stone Belt Empowered Learning Series presents: ACCESSING DISABILITY RESOURCES FOR A LIFETIME OF SUCCESS

### WHEN AND WHERE?

Thursday, November 18 @ the IU Innovation Center

2719 East 10th Street, Bloomington

Offered twice:

10 A.M. to noon & 5:30 to 6:30 P.M.

### LEARN AND UNDERSTAND

- Learn about supports that exist for individuals throughout their lifespan
- Understand when and how connections should be made to fully utilize resources
- Hear from experts representing early intervention, school age, adult and behavioral health programs

### RESERVE A SPACE

Space is limited. This event is free and open to the public. To reserve a space for the seminar contact the Stone Belt Community Engagement Department at 812-332-2168, ext. 269, or via e-mail at [communityengagement@stonebelt.org](mailto:communityengagement@stonebelt.org).

# Recovery Engagement Center Offers Information, Support and Hope

By Amy Williams, Marketing and Public Relations Manager for Centerstone

The nature of addiction recovery requires sustained support. Some individuals repeatedly exit and enter treatment programs. Most encounter an ongoing struggle with addiction, which is sometimes life-long. The Recovery Engagement Center offers a place of support, hope and information for anyone in recovery.

The Recovery Engagement Center (REC) is a Bloomington area community support network for those recovering from the disease of addiction. REC provides information on housing, employment, peer support and addictions treatment from volunteers, professionals and agencies. It is staffed by volunteers.

The Recovery Engagement Center opened July 1, 2010. REC is already making great strides in growing a community network with 97 visitors to the center in August and 216 in September. REC now averages 12 to 15 visitors daily with finding employment, getting sponsor support and coping with housing and legal issues as the main three reasons for seeking help at the center.

"We now have a place for people who say they just want to stay clean and sober today, but perhaps don't want treatment or a

counselor. We have options for anyone who walks in the door," says REC Recovery Coach Bryan Overbey.

REC provides a safe environment for people to get help, talk openly about themselves and the issues they face and move along toward recovery. "Recovery is not always a straight line," says Overbey.

Instead REC focuses on building recovery capital. This includes things like strong social support networks, access to jobs and job skills, safe and affordable housing, education, and coping skills to help manage stress.

"People can get help where they are. They have a place to let go of their pain and find someone that cares," says Joe L., a REC volunteer who has been in recovery for 20 years. "I have been there," he says, "and seeing someone come in and change their life is something money can't buy."

Overbey recently worked with an individual who was homeless as well as struggling with addiction issues. "He had no place to stay. He worked on improving his life skills and now has an apartment. He comes regularly to groups and is able to look for work and access other community supports," he says.

Programs available at the Recovery Engagement Center include bi-weekly life skills training groups for both family members and individuals in recovery; recovery coaches to assist individuals in building sustainable community support and recovery capital; Alcoholics Anonymous, ALANON and Narcotics Anonymous meetings; pre-screening and referral for treatment at a variety of partner treatment agencies and faith-based programs; and fellowship and social activities.

REC still has a need for volunteers for things like staffing the reception desk, keeping the web site updated, helping participants with writing a resume and coordinating community resources. Peer supporters are also needed. "Anyone willing to work with others can get involved," says Overbey. "We can match the skills and interests of volunteers with the need of participants."

"The Recovery Engagement Center is working with many partners in the community," says Centerstone Director of Specialty Addiction and Forensic Services Linda Grove-Paul, LCSW.

On October 12 the center partnered with IU School of Nursing, Positive Link, Bloomington Hospital, and the City of

Bloomington to provide health screening for any interested community member.

On October 28 the Recovery Engagement Center will host the first annual Narcotics Overdose Prevention and Education (NOPE) Candlelight Vigil beginning at 6:30 pm in the parking lot of the center at 221 North Rogers Street in Bloomington. The event will include keynote speakers, Bloomington Police Chief Mike Diekhoff and Monroe County Presiding Judge Circuit Court 3 Kenneth Todd as well as food, music and a memorial service. The event is an effort to bring people together to prevent future deaths from overdose and celebrate the memory of those lost to addiction disorders.

Volunteer orientation is offered monthly at the Recovery Engagement Center. For more information about volunteering or the services and programs available call 812-337-2424, e-mail [Recbloomington@gmail.com](mailto:Recbloomington@gmail.com) or visit <http://recbloomington.webs.com/>.

**Centerstone**  
812-314-3413  
[www.centerstone.org](http://www.centerstone.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 17-20

### What Big Brothers Big Sisters means to me and my Little

By Chelsea Pacheco

I became a Big Sister to Rachel in September 2009 and I can genuinely say, it has probably been one of the most rewarding experiences of my life! I am an only child myself and I came into Big Brothers Big Sisters looking to be a positive role model for another child. I was matched with my Little, Rachel, and we have been forming a strong friendship ever since. We participated in Bowl for Kids Sake last March and I would say that was a huge turning point in our relationship. I've watched her grow more comfortable with herself and open up more to me as well as her other classmates. This year has been particularly special because I can tell how much she has grown up in a few short summer months! When I see her on Fridays she greets me with a warm smile and a hug and immediately starts telling me about her week – this is my favorite part of my week! To see the difference I've made in her confidence levels has been something that I am forever grateful for.



**Big Brothers Big Sisters**  
of South Central Indiana

So much so, that I'm also now an intern for Big Brothers Big Sisters and hope to continue to work for the organization after I graduate in May. It is because of Rachel that I have discovered my passion in life: helping others and becoming a part of the non-profit world. If I hadn't discovered the organization while driving around town one day my Sophomore year, I would

likely be settling in that current career path I was following. I can honestly say I love what I'm doing at my internship and I love the feeling of

helping others. It is also great to go into the school and have little kids run up to me and say, "Hey aren't you Rachel's Big Sister?" and "I want to have a Big Sister too!". I also can't help but have a smile from ear to ear when Rachel and I are on the playground and one of her friends comes up to her and says, "I wish I had a Big Sister just like yours Rachel!". I am so excited to see what the rest of the year holds for Rachel and me!



Courtesy photo

To apply to be a Big or learn more about Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana visit [www.bigsindiana.org](http://www.bigsindiana.org).



# Special Section: Voices Seldom Heard

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

## Shalom Writers' Circle: Variations on a Theme by Emily Dickenson

I had a little bird  
And like a dove  
I named her hope  
I listened to her song  
And fed her every day  
But in an absent minded moment  
I left the door ajar  
And in her born adornment  
She up and flew away.

– Kay Bull

I won't write  
for the bird.  
I won't speak  
for the day

– Carolyn Holt

***“Hope is a thing with wings / that perches in the soul” – Emily Dickenson***

Hope denies me hope  
To hope is a price set too high  
For a working class salary.  
Dashing hope, the sport of kings,  
Mallets hard swung from  
Saddles set on high  
Upon the beast's breaking back  
That so many ride.  
While I'm denied arrival  
I used to wonder where  
The ride was going  
Anymore, no point to care  
The floor, the stair,  
They lead me nowhere.  
And since I'm already there,  
I don't need a bird.

– Kent Johnson

bird  
bird fly away  
watch over me.  
Do you see my heart,  
Like I pray every day?

– Carolyn Holt

*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 Thursday afternoon from 1:30-2:30 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](mailto:sgayk@indiana.edu).*

# Special Section: Jail Rehabilitation Programs

## AIR (Addicts in Recovery) Arts and Humanities Class in the MCCC

By Susan Sandberg

Since the fall of 2005 I've had the privilege of serving as a volunteer in the Monroe County Correctional Center teaching a Saturday afternoon arts and humanities class introducing plays, poetry, music, films, photography, visual arts and lively discussions about current events. The class began as a play reading group discussing the theater arts. Each week I'd bring in plays dealing with subject matter that MCCC inmates can relate to: Shakespeare dramas, *Death of a Salesman*, *12 Angry Men*, *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, *The Exonerated*, *The Night Thoreau Spent in Jail*, *Fences*, *Joe Turner's Come and Gone*, *Gem of the Ocean*, *The Odd Couple*, *Lost in Yonkers*, and scenes from the musical comedy, *Grease*. Over time we've expanded focus to include all forms of art.

We've talked about seasonal books like Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol* and the classic Mary Shelley novel, *Frankenstein*. We are about to begin a study of parody through the Mel Brook's spoof, "Young Frankenstein." Over the Labor Day weekend, we shared writings of Studs Terkel, Eugene Debbs, and poetry by Carl Sandburg. Around the 4th of July, we examine great American political speeches, and in February, we revisit the inspirational "I Have a Dream" by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We've examined quirky, off-beat films like "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" and "O Brother Where Art Thou." We explore all types of music that also serve as inspirations for spontaneous writing exercises. The music of Bruce Springsteen and John Mellencamp provide foundations for good discussions about the life of average Americans in working class towns. As gentlemen with musical talent join the AIR program, we focus on their favorite music and songwriting. Occasionally I bring in my guitars for the participants to play and share their gifts for singing and songwriting with their colleagues in AIR block and with New Leaf volunteers. We've invited facilitators of Women Writing for a Change to join our class and engage the AIR block in creative writing exercises. I've shared books about artists and photographers and encouraged

AIR participants with visual arts talents to create their own drawings and cartoons.

Many of the writings from the men of AIR block have appeared in *Safety Net* in the *Voices Seldom Heard* pages, and their works are heartfelt expressions of their lives and experiences behind bars. Our Saturday afternoon sessions are both educational and fun, and I occasionally bring in DVD's of National Geographic documentaries of the wilderness and expansive scenes from *Planet Earth* to make up for the fact that the First Floor Dorm in the MCCC where the AIR participants live, contain no windows. Deprived of looking out on Bloomington, the gentlemen appreciate seeing cinematography of the

world's natural beauty. One of the most important aspects of this arts and humanities class is the opportunity to socialize in an informal and safe environment. It gives us all the chance to open our minds to how others think and feel, and that is powerful medicine. Whether your classroom is on the campuses of IU or Ivy Tech or behind locked doors in the windowless 1st Floor Dorm of the MCCC, a study of the arts and popular culture will always inspire and expand our worlds.

Co-facilitator, Joan White, and I enjoy sharing the poetry, films, essays, books, plays, and music that we love. When Lotus Festival is in town, we share CD's of eclectic world music artists so they can experience a taste of Lotus. When Cardinal Stage produces a classic play like *The Grapes of Wrath*, we'll bring it in for a shared experience in the theater. As Joan and I plan the curriculum, we look at what's current, what stands the test of time, and what the gentleman in AIR might

find interesting as they reflect on their incarceration, think about their futures and work toward recovery. Sometimes they share their musical tastes with us, and Joan and I appreciate hearing about what they like and why it appeals to them. From bluegrass to blues, classical to rock, jazz to rap, we keep our ears tuned and minds open for new ideas. We discover that all forms of musical and artistic expression contain universal themes we can all relate to as human beings.

On October 9, the AIR block was treated to a return engagement of spoken word artist, Matthew Jackson, from Columbus. Matthew has his vibrant poetry collected in a book called *Minding My Chaos*, and he

appears regularly with his performance poetry colleagues, The Reservoir Dogwoods. Matthew recently teamed up with rock musicians for a CD under the banner of Paperback Riot. When Matthew first appeared as a guest artist on the AIR block it was following his appearance at a WFHB Firehouse Follies radio show that I'd attended at the Monroe County History Center. During the radio show he performed several of his performance poems, but a standout was about his encounter with a homeless man on Kirkwood. The vivid experience of giving money to this nameless person caused Matthew to examine stereotypes about the homeless and write a powerful and descriptive piece called "Defacing Bums." I was blown away by Matthew's carefully chosen words, vivid images, explosive stage presence, and invited him to share his work with the AIR block. I knew the men would appreciate the bold theatricality of Matthew Jackson and the poetry from his creative

mind. Matthew graciously accepted our invitation to share his talents with us last September, and agreed to come back this October for another taste of poetry slam. Matthew once again shared his inspirations, and captivated the AIR block with his newer works of spoken word art. His work is both edgy and real. The session inspired some of the AIR participants to write their own poetry on the spot. Some of their impromptu works are shared in this edition of *Safety-Net*, and we're proud of all of them for having the courage to express their thoughts and printing them.

It is healthy to share a few laughs in the AIR block during our Saturday afternoon humanities classes, and I never doubt the value and healing powers of the arts. There is nothing more inspiring than carefully chosen words, more soothing than the spirit and energy of music. There is value in reading plays together and enjoying the beauty of a documentary about the natural world. We exercise our minds when we encounter the arts. In a locked down environment like the Monroe County jail, the opportunity to travel outside of the concrete walls through artistic journeys are welcome breaks in the long day's routine. Experiencing art allows us all to feel more human, and never is there a more suitable place to encourage a thoughtful study of the arts and humanities than in our jails and prisons. They must become healthier environments for improving life skills, not warehouses for bitterness, despair, mindless activity and dysfunction. Society and our communities will pay a severe price for refusing to invest in appropriate and effective therapeutic programs both inside and out of our fast-growing, overcrowded penal institutions. Our pragmatic understanding of the human and financial costs of crime, punishment, incarceration and rehabilitation begins in our local jails. In the interest of maintaining a safe and civil Bloomington, we cannot ignore the human needs of inmates who will eventually return to our community to try and rebuild their lives.

# AIR Community Poems

*The following poems were written by members of the AIR Community who take part in the AIR (Addicts in Recovery) Arts and Humanities Class in the MCCC*

## Me

So far I've been a drug addicted crazy  
Me – I never cease to amaze me  
Insanity has brought me here  
I've chosen not my family, but a cold shot of beer  
I truly love them deep inside  
My fear and failures make me hide  
I fear my life is nearly over  
I pray to God it'll end with me sober  
Before I go I'd like to say I love you,  
Kyle, Cadyn, Coby, Mom  
The legacy I leave has not been taught  
The fight I fight cannot be bought  
Just keep your wits and do your best  
I'm proud of you, I know you'll pass your test

– Buck 10/9/10

## Come back

Where did u come from, where did u go?  
Will you come back or don't you know?  
Or will you get scared and keep running away,  
Forgetting feelings that won't go away?  
You can't shake it or fake it these feelings inside  
If you'd just stop running I'd be by your side  
Forever your man, forever my lady  
For the rest of my life or until the world ends  
I'll love you, you'll see that you can't hide these feelings,  
or our memories of moments lost in time  
The sooner you realize the better I'll be  
And my love will always be here for you from me.

– R.K.P.

## Letter

What's up? Not much here, just time.  
Damn! What do you do when you're in a cell,  
dark and silent, with a head full of thoughts of a life  
that seems so out of reach.

I miss everything about my life  
all the way down to wakin' up pissed off  
over not having a cigarette to smoke.

Thoughts of a life outside these walls  
is enough to stop a man from becoming institutionalized to prison.  
When you forget about life outside you truly lose yourself to the system  
but yet make yourself forget the outside world  
to prevent vulnerability to emotions others will use against you  
feels so right, like a cup of soup during a snow storm.

I enjoy memories, but at the same time it hurts so much  
because I know it will be a long time before I get to make new ones.  
Three weeks down, years to go.

– Bentley '10

## The Whole Nine

There's only 1 way  
To say I love you  
But there's so many reasons  
Why I do

1. is 'cause you love me
2. you love me unconditionally even though I treated you bad
3. you always see the good in me and even though I'm not your brother
4. you really know how to love a brother and even though you are not my mother
5. you take care of me like my mother and when I'm all inside of you
6. you make me feel good inside too. We also come from 2 different back-grounds
7. but you let me know you always be down and even though life's a bitch
8. I know you's a ride or die chick.
9. I'm glad you always be mine's 'cause a good woman is hard to find

So be my Happy Valentine  
'til the end of time

– Lo '10

## Why Me?

I opened my eyes this morning asking, why me?  
Did I do something to offend you, or bend you, why me?  
Do my color play a part, did I look wrong, maybe fart? Why me?  
I am a friend, not your enemy, so never misstep and petite me. Why me?  
I could be your son, uncle or dad,  
I would never speak these words if I was bad.  
Why me?  
I am a leader and one day you'll see.  
I just think a lot and ask an important question like...  
Why me?

– Ty '10

## Touched Me

Unfold this pack  
put this death in my spoon  
wait for the rush  
my worries will be over soon  
here it comes, everything melts away  
death has touched me on  
another day.  
Not completely taken me  
just a tease  
Death has just touched me  
and left me on  
my knees!

– Bentley '10

## Lookin'

Lookin' at this gray  
thoughts on my mind  
day after day  
Reminiscing  
my Grind.  
Time passes on  
yet I feel frozen  
in this cell from  
Dusk 'til Dawn  
in my incarcerated  
hell.

– Bentley '10

# Special Section: South Central Community Action Program

## The Head Start program works!

By Lauren Sedam, Communications Intern, South Central Community Action Program

*This story is about Tillie Allgood, who has been helped by SCCAP, and now helps others via the Head Start Program.*

Tillie Allgood is stuck, and she'll tell you so herself.

But it's not a bad thing.

Tillie is a teacher for Head Start at the South Central Community Action Program in Bloomington, where she provides a classroom experience for 3- to 5-year-old children of low-income families. She's been involved in the program since she herself was in school, serving in almost every role there is.

As a teenager, Tillie put in countless hours of volunteer work while her own brother was involved in the program. When it came time for her own children, Patricia and Patrick, now 19 and 20, to become enrolled in school, she said the choice to start them at Head Start was only logical.

Tillie then served on the Council of Involved Families and worked as a sub for three years. She has been able to get her certification to drive a bus, her Associates degree, her Child Development Associate certification, and she is working on her Bachelor's degree, all things she said she probably wouldn't have been able to do without the help of Head Start.

After her own children graduated from the program, Tillie took a full-time posi-

tion. She hasn't left for 14 years.

In that time, Tillie has seen a lot of kids pass through. She's even had a future State Spelling Bee champion start out in her class.

She said some families need a little more guidance than others, and when that's the case, Head Start works to connect the family with resources that will help support them through the years.

Other times, she said, parents just aren't sure how to get what their kids need and need a little guidance. Tillie recalled one family of young parents who had six kids at the time. She said they knew they needed to get their children in school, but they weren't sure exactly what to do.

They found Head Start, and Tillie had every one of their kids in class. She said as each kid passed through, they were more and more prepared, picking up on things from those that came before.

"The growth of that family was astounding," Tillie said. "The support that we were able to deliver within that poverty... was just an amazing thing."

She said the kids are now entering high school and are involved in a lot of mainstream activities like sports.

Yet, she said the relationships with the family don't end when kids graduate from the program and move on.

"Even after each child left, we were able to provide support just by

being a safe place to ask questions," she said.

But the kids in Tillie's class aren't the only successful aspect of Head Start in Tillie's life. She's seen this deep connection to the program in her own kids, who she said support the program "210 percent."

They were both involved in Head Start as kids and have spent time volunteering

and supporting their mom as they've gotten older.

She said her son, Patrick, spent a lot of time helping out with the playground. "One minute he'd be shoveling mulch, and the next he'd be in here lying on the floor and playing with the kids," she said. "I think that shows the kind of belief they have in this program."

This is a good example of how Tillie says the Head Start program forms a tight and lasting bond—a family. As her son was preparing to move out of the house after graduation, she said he told her not to be sad because she "still had her Head Start kids, and they need you"

This attachment is exactly what Tillie says makes the Head Start family unique: Once you're in, and once you believe in the program, you're stuck.

"Those friendships and those relationships are long-lasting," she said.

She encourages those who don't know about the program to come in and experience the classroom for themselves.

"There's something here for everyone," Tillie said. "Regardless of the need or level, there's something here for everyone."

Tillie Allgood is stuck, and she'd tell you so herself.

But it's a good thing.



Courtesy photo

## SCCAP offers assistance with winter fuel bills

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

The South Central Community Action Program is now accepting applications for assistance with winter fuel bills for households.

SCCAP began taking appointments on Oct. 5 for a winter heating benefit through its Energy Assistance Program.

The agency is also taking applications for low-income households in need of bulk fuel.

In addition, SCCAP will offer its energy education workshop for those who want to participate. Participants will receive an energy conservation kit, as well as information on staying warm while trying to

reduce utility costs.

Each household applying for the Energy Assistance Program will need to provide income documentation for the past 12 months for all household members ages 18 and older, current heat and electric bills, social security cards and lease information for those who rent.

One change to the Energy Assistance Program this year, as a result of state policy changes, is that households whose utilities are included in their rent are not eligible for the program.

Eligibility for the program is based on gross household income -- household

size- maximum annual income: 1-\$16,245; 2-\$21,855; 3-\$27,465; 4-\$33,075; 5-\$38,685; 6-\$44,295.

Last winter, 5,266 households received assistance through SCCAP's Energy Assistance Program.

SCCAP is a nonprofit organization that provides opportunities for low-income citizens to move toward personal and economic independence. Its programs include: Affordable Rental Housing, the Circles Initiative, Energy Assistance, Family Development, Head Start, Individual Development Accounts, Section 8 Housing and Weatherization.

**SCCAP — South Central Community Action Program**  
1500 W. 15th Street • Bloomington, IN 47404 • 812-339-3447

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

**For appointments or additional information, the public should call:**

**Monroe County**  
1500 W. 15th St.  
Bloomington  
339-3447

**Morgan County**  
133 W. Washington  
Martinsville  
342-1518

**Owen County**  
145 N. Harrison  
Spencer  
829-2279

**Brown County**  
168 Jefferson St.  
Nashville  
988-6636



# The Circles Initiative: A program for low income people (Circle leaders) to improve their situation

By Bonnie Vesely, Family Development Coordinator for the South Central Community Action Program

## Goal of Circles Initiative

Circles™ is a strategy to end poverty in the United States! The initiative assists low-income citizens of Monroe County, called Circle Leaders, as they create and follow their OWN plans to build their resources and transition out of poverty. After Getting Ahead training, the Circle leaders are then matched with Allies who undergo a 6 hour Bridges out of Poverty training and a 2-3 hour orientation.

## “Getting Ahead” training for Circle Leaders

Participants must first complete a Getting Ahead training. The graduates are then offered the opportunity to become Circle Leaders. Their families are each matched with three or four Community Allies, people who have plenty of resources in their lives. Circle Leaders are CALLED Leaders very intentionally, because the plan they create is TRULY their own, not a plan that someone else has created for them. They lead the way in working toward their goals, letting Allies know the kinds of help they need to get there.

## Training and orientation for Circle Allies

Allies complete a Bridges out of Poverty training before matches are made – and the day that the matches are announced is another very joyful day for everyone! Allies provide an emotional support system, problem-solving assistance, connections to the more affluent community, and help in navigating the hidden cultural norms of the middle-class. Above all, they are friends to their Circle Leaders, and although the commitment from both Allies and Circle

Leaders is 18 months, many of these relationships will last a lifetime.

## Weekly meetings and programs

Weekly meetings, complete with dinner, childcare and a terrific Youth Community program, help to build friendships as everyone breaks bread together, and also provide programming on topics that will help Circle Leaders reach their goals.

## Circles™ ALSO works to break down local barriers that make it very difficult for low-income people get ahead

The barriers include unaffordable housing, lack of living-wage jobs, transportation issues, predatory lending, childcare costs, educational system concerns and health care issues. We do this through monthly “Big View” meetings of Circles™ AND the larger Monroe County community; these meetings are designed to work step-by-step, one issue at a time, on finding solutions. The Circles™ community, in partnership with the Bloomington Community and Family Resource Commission, is currently working to change the rental situation for low-income families in Bloomington and Monroe County by taking steps to increase Section 8 housing opportunities, because stable housing is the basis necessary to move forward with one’s life and become self-sufficient. But in addition to removing LOCAL barriers, by reaching a tipping point in the community’s understanding of poverty we hope to affect legislation, changing policies and procedures statewide and nationally. A Circles™ site in Ohio has been a key player in the passing of legislation to put strict limits on pay-day lending in that state.



The third Circles graduating class. Front row left to right: Luz Lopez & Sebastian, Patricia Stinson, Tawana King, Rachael Williams, Leslee Orndorff, Glenda Standish. Back row left to right: Linda Patton (staff), Eduardo Isidio & Cesar, Heather Miller, Coley Dwigans, Shundale King, Anna Pineda, Kim Phillips, Carrie Felton (staff). Courtesy Photo.

## Comments from Circles’ 3rd graduating class

“I want to start off saying how much I appreciate each and every one of you. Regardless of what I receive out of “Circles” I will always cherish the relationships and bonds I have attained. True friendships mean so much to me. Not being from Bloomington, I lack the privilege of having many social ties. I moved to Bloomington a little over 3 years ago to create a new and better life for my 2 girls and myself. It is a constant battle trying to get by; even harder to get ahead.

Being a full time single mother makes it tough to juggle my job, my grades, and still try to find the time to give my children the attention I know they deserve. Living in poverty not only means lack of finances, but it also affects what we want to do as a family. Worrying about the future tends to drown out the present. Most importantly, the valuable time with my beautiful children I miss because I am constantly stressing and trying to hold everything together.

Being in Circles gives me the relief of knowing that I have people in my community that has my back. So when I think of what Circles means to me... It’s the sense of peace I feel when I think of the overall impact that Circles can have on my life, knowing it’s going to be alright. For that, I thank you for allowing me the opportunity to be a part of something so life changing.”

– Leslee Orndorff

“...Before this I thought I was ashamed to be in poverty. After this, I really feel like I’m a magician and I’ve done it all and I can do it all. Maybe we can help the community out and bring more people where I’m at, so thank you.”

– Heather Miller

“Through Poverty comes the future of what not everyone can see. It is love, hope, ambition for you and me. I Patricia Stinson have learned to stand and be stronger no matter what obstacle I come up against. I will continue to break down poverty barriers and generational causes of poverty for my children and grandchildren. There are a few people I would like to thank.

Gene & Jo — If it wasn’t for you being here for me every step of the way, I would not be giving this graduation speech. Linda Patton — Thank you for your support and excepting me when I had doubts that anyone else did. Carrie — You are kind, understanding, patient, a great person. Even though you’ve only been with this class for several months you couldn’t have come at a better time. Last, but certainly not least, my Circles class.

I have never graduated from a class or school before. I am so proud to say I went all the way with Circles and will continue with my Allies. I came too far to give up. We came too far to give up. We can’t give up. We will continue to push forward.

Once again, Thank you so much.”

– Patricia Stinson

## Building Dreams: Family Development

By Bonnie Vesely, Family Development Coordinator for the South Central Community Action Program

We all want to lead happy, relatively affluent lives, free of constant struggle to survive. And we want that for our children. But if we start our lives in poverty, or “things happen” along the way to impoverish us, life can amount to little more than an endless effort to put out fires. Achieving our dreams can seem so distant that the dreams themselves burn away.

As Family Development Coordinator for the South Central Community Action Program, I partner with families as they

recreate those dreams and undertake the journey to achieve them. I assist families (and individuals) with setting goals, breaking those goals down into intermediary steps and immediate actions that can move each participant forward with his/her plan to create a better life. As families face challenges along the way, I assist them with identifying their barriers and finding solutions.

My experience in Family Develop-

See “DREAMS”, page 15

# Special Section: Volunteer Network

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

*By Elizabeth D. Savich, Director City of Bloomington Volunteer Network • [savichb@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:savichb@bloomington.in.gov)*

## Compost at the Food Bank

Hoosier Hills Food Bank composts its food waste as well as cardboard diverted from its solid waste stream, keeping these items out of the landfill. Three to five people (or teams) are needed to commit to a weekly composting shift, separating compostable materials from packaging, transporting compostables from the food bank to the garden, maintaining the piles, screening the end product, and more. Volunteers must be 18 unless supervised by an adult. Please contact Jessica Williams at (812) 334-8374 or [garden@hhfoodbank.org](mailto:garden@hhfoodbank.org). ([www.hhfoodbank.org](http://www.hhfoodbank.org))

## VITAL Adult and ESL Tutoring

VITAL (Volunteers in Tutoring Adult Learners) provides English as a Second Language (ESL) tutoring for adults. Fall training is on Nov. 13 and 23. Instruction and materials for both are free. Minimum age is 18. Please contact Sue Sater at (812) 349-3050 or [ssater@mcpl.info](mailto:ssater@mcpl.info). ([www.mcpl.info/vital](http://www.mcpl.info/vital))

## Serve on a City Board or Commission

Through more than 30 boards and commissions, citizens provide input on policies that shape their government and their city. Current openings include: Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association, Commission on the Status of Women, Commission on Sustainability, Community and Family Resources Commission, Environmental Commission, Housing Trust Fund Board of Directors, and Traffic Commission. Applications are always welcome. Residence within the city's corporation limits is required, as is a significant personal commitment, so applicants should consider their ability to commit their time and personal energy before applying. Applications and more information can be found at [www.bloomington.in.gov/clerk](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/clerk) or people can go to the clerk's office inside City Hall at 401 N. Morton St.

## Interfaith Winter Shelter Training

The Interfaith Winter Shelter, which rotates among several congregations, needs hundreds of volunteers! Interested in how the shelter organizes volunteer duties? The set-up shift readies the sleeping and snack areas. The 8:30-11:30 p.m. shift registers guests, receives medications, monitors all areas and secures doors. The 11:15 p.m.- 3 a.m. shift maintains the intake desk, admits approved late arrivals, and monitors. The 2:45-6 a.m. shift maintains the intake desk, admits approved late arrivals, monitors, awakens guests, and assists with the site report. The clean up shift, from 6-7:30 a.m., wipes down and puts away cots, pillows, tables, and chairs, collects and bags bedding for laundry, cleans floors and restrooms, empties trash cans, and sets up space for day use. Night shift volunteers are especially needed. A commitment of four shifts is requested; minimum age is 18. Please register for the next training through the website,

<http://interfaithwintershelter.org>

## Civics/Citizenship Instructor

Do you have experience working with English language learners in an educational setting? City of Bloomington Latino Programs and Outreach needs two experienced instructors to teach a civics class to approximately ten students who are preparing for the naturalization test to become U.S. citizens. Volunteers must have experience in instruction; all course materials will be provided. The class will be from 6:30-8 p.m. on Tues. and Thurs. from March 1 to April 7 (12 sessions). Please contact Melissa Britton at (812) 349-3860 or [brittonm@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:brittonm@bloomington.in.gov). ([www.bloomington.in.gov/latino](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/latino))

## AIDS Memorial Quilt Exhibit - Nov. 11-15

The AIDS Memorial Quilt began with a single panel created in 1987. It now has over 47,000 panels, each one commemorating the life of someone who has died from an AIDS-related illness. These panels come from every state in the nation and every corner of the globe, commemorating more than 91,000 lives lost to AIDS. By revealing the humanity behind the statistics, the Quilt teaches compassion and inspires individuals to take direct responsibility for their own well-being and that of their family, friends, and community. A 52-panel exhibit, the largest AIDS Memorial Quilt display in Indiana history, will be on display Nov. 11-15 in Alumni Hall of the Indiana Memorial Union at IU. Volunteers are needed for publicity before the event, doing tasks such as researching contacts, submitting press releases, hanging posters, and tabling at fairs. Volunteer greeters and monitors are also needed during public display times. Please contact Jill Stowers at [communityaidsaction-group@gmail.com](mailto:communityaidsaction-group@gmail.com). ([www.thecaag.org](http://www.thecaag.org))

## Volunteer Coordinator

My Sister's Closet of Monroe County is seeking someone to fill the position of Volunteer Coordinator to attract and coordinate community and student volunteers on many levels. The position requires a commitment of at least four hours per week. Please send your resume with past non-profit experience to Sandy at [skeller@absoluteresearch.net](mailto:skeller@absoluteresearch.net) or contact her at (812) 335-6603. ([www.sisterscloset.org](http://www.sisterscloset.org))

## Thanksgiving Meal - Nov. 13

On Nov. 13, the youth-serving organization "Cry of the Children" will host their annual community Thanksgiving meal at Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church, located at 302 N. Rogers Street. Volunteers are needed to help serve the community during this festive occasion. Volunteers must be at least 15 years old. Please contact Dellsie Boddie at (812) 361-4059 or [cryofthechildren@gmail.com](mailto:cryofthechildren@gmail.com).

## America Reads!

Did you know that one out of four children

entering fourth grade cannot read at grade level? RSVP, the Retired & Senior Volunteer Program, is helping to change this statistic to prepare students for lasting success. If you are 55+ years of age and can read, you can participate as an America Reads tutor. Tutors commit to volunteering one hour/week during the school year and/or summer months in schools and libraries throughout Monroe and Owen Counties. Substitutes are available when you cannot make it. All training is provided, and no experience is necessary. You may find your life positively changed as well! Please contact Michelle Martin Colman at (812) 322-1500 or [mmartin@area10agency.org](mailto:mmartin@area10agency.org). ([www.area10agency.org/rsvp](http://www.area10agency.org/rsvp))

## American Red Cross

411 E. 7th St. Bloomington, IN 47408

**Mission:** The American Red Cross is a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement. It provides relief to victims of disasters and helps people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

## December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

The Holiday Mail for Heroes program enables the American public to send a touch of home this holiday season to members of our U.S. Armed Forces, veterans and their families. Volunteers are needed to help sort cards and ensure the success of this project.

## Contact Information:

June Taylor  
812-332-7292  
[jtaylor@monroe-redcross.org](mailto:jtaylor@monroe-redcross.org)  
[www.monroe-redcross.org](http://www.monroe-redcross.org)

## Area 10 Agency on Aging

630 W Edgewood Dr. Ellettsville, IN 47429

**Mission:** Area 10 Agency on Aging is a private, not-for-profit corporation serving elderly persons in Monroe and Owen Counties. Their mission is to improve the quality of life and celebrate the independence, health, and dignity of all senior citizens.

## November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Thanksgiving Day meals will be given to homebound seniors in Owen and Monroe counties. Meals are prepared by Community Kitchen and volunteers deliver the meals to pre-registered seniors.

## December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Christmas Day meals will be given to homebound seniors in Owen and Monroe counties. Meals are prepared by Community Kitchen and volunteers deliver the meals to pre-registered seniors.

## Contact Information:

Mary Boutain  
812-935-2505  
[mboutain@area10agency.org](mailto:mboutain@area10agency.org)  
[www.area10agency.org](http://www.area10agency.org)

## Backstreet Missions, Inc.

215 S. Westplex Ave. Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** Backstreet Missions is a Christian not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping the homeless and hurting.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** Thanksgiving food basket distribution will be Sat. Nov. 20th. Food collections are welcome between Nov. 8th-12th for this outreach. Food may be dropped off at the Agape House women's shelter. Food is always

## City of Bloomington Volunteer Network

401 N. Morton Street, Suite 260

PO Box 100

Bloomington IN 47402

812-349-3472

fax: 812-349-3483

[volunteer@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:volunteer@bloomington.in.gov)

[savichb@bloomington.in.gov](mailto:savichb@bloomington.in.gov)

[www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer)

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/City-of-Bloomington-Volunteer-Network/56202931201?ref=ts>

welcomed on a year-round basis to supply the pantry for those staying at the mission, for the food pantry/ assistance outreach and for the "soup kitchen", Geno's Cafeteria

**Adopt-A-Family:** Adopt-A-Child Christmas program. Call 812-333-6360 to get clothing, shoe sizes and gift preferences for children

## November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Volunteers help distribute Thanksgiving food baskets and serve food on Thanksgiving Day at the "soup kitchen"

## December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Volunteers help wrap Christmas gifts for children

## Contact Information:

Linda Kelley  
812-333-6360  
[linda@backstreet.org](mailto:linda@backstreet.org)  
[www.backstreet.org](http://www.backstreet.org)

## Bloomington Transit

130 West Grimes Lane Bloomington, IN 47403

**Holiday Collection Drive:** Help Stuff the Bus with Toys!

During the holiday season, Bloomington Transit is partnering with B97 and the Salvation Army to help make the holidays merrier for children and families in need. The goal is to literally "STUFF" a decorated Bloomington Transit bus completely full of donated unwrapped new toys, new children's coats and mittens to be distributed in the Bloomington area. Persons wishing to make a donation to Stuff-A-Bus can either drop off their items at the bus Dec. 3rd-Dec. 13th (see [www.bloomingtontransit.com](http://www.bloomingtontransit.com) for locations and times) or at Bloomington Transit's main office at 130 West Grimes Lane.

## December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Stuff-A-Bus is made possible, in part, by volunteers. Volunteers staff the bus and accept donations. Without this assistance, Stuff-A-Bus would not be possible. We are in need of persons interested in staffing the bus in two-hour increments for the dates and times listed above.

## Contact Information:

Brenda Underwood  
812-332-5688  
[underwbr@bloomingtontransit.com](mailto:underwbr@bloomingtontransit.com)  
[www.bloomingtontransit.com](http://www.bloomingtontransit.com)

## Boys and Girls Clubs of Bloomington

311 S. Lincoln Street, P.O. Box 1716 Bloomington

**See "NETWORK", next page**

*The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network is your source for information about volunteering locally. To search for more opportunities, visit [www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer) or call 349-3433. The inclusion of an organization in this list does not imply City endorsement or support of the organization's activities or policies.*

## NETWORK

Continued from previous page

IN 47402

**Mission:** The mission of the Boys and Girls Clubs of Bloomington is to enable all young people, especially those who need them most, to become caring, productive, responsible citizens.

### **Holiday Collection Drive:**

**Adopt-A-Family:** Help make a holiday possible for a family that is truly in need. Family members from the Crestmont Boys and Girls Club reside in the BHA Crestmont Community or Arlington Park Apartments. Average family income for our families is less than \$6,000 a year!

**December Holiday Volunteer Needs:** Come spend part of your "time off" with our kids! Volunteers will act as 'volunteer counselors' and will be paired with a staff member and group of 10-12 campers. Volunteer counselors will assist staff with programs and activities throughout the day. Depending on the shift chosen, volunteers may also accompany us on our daily field trip! Camp Days: December 20-23rd and 27-30th 2010. Shifts are 8:30 a.m.-12:30p.m., 12:00-4:00p.m. OR 2:00-6:00pm

**Contact Information:** Audrey Hall, Camp and Athletic Director, ahall@bgcbloomington.org; Shawna Meyer-Niederman, smeyern@bgcbloomington.org  
812-336-6501  
www.bgcbloomington.org

### **City of Bloomington Latino Programs and Outreach**

401 N. Morton St. Suite 260 Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** The City of Bloomington Latino Programs and Outreach was created to serve our community's rapidly growing Latino immigrant population, serving as the liaison for the department and community organizations providing support to the Spanish speaking population and/or promoting diversity and cultures.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** Donations of new items such as children's clothing, toys and books are greatly appreciated. All donations are paired up

with families in need during the holidays. For more details please call.

### **Contact Information:**

Melissa Britton  
812-349-3860  
brittonm@bloomington.in.gov  
www.bloomington.in.gov/latino

### **City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation**

401 N. Morton St. Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** The City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department provides comprehensive programs that encompass educational, cultural, recreational, environmental, health, fitness, volunteer, and leadership opportunities.

### **November Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

Do you enjoy the festive community atmosphere of the Farmers' Market? Searching for the perfect holiday gift? The Holiday Market features some of your favorite, locally grown farm products, arts and crafts by area artisans and those unforgettable Tubasantas. We're looking for volunteer elves to decorate, serve refreshments and assist with teardown Saturday, Nov. 27th. Volunteers will be trained at the beginning of their shifts. Showers Plaza, 401 N. Morton St., 4-5 volunteers per shift.

### **December Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

Enjoy the Winter Wonderland and help lead arts and crafts, monitor the Candy Cane Hunt, and register participants Sunday, Dec. 5th. Volunteers will be trained at the beginning of their shift. Baneker Community Center, 903 W. Seventh St., 10-12 volunteers. Skate with Santa, facilitate arts and crafts with children, and provide tasty treats to warm their tummies. This event is Dec. 18th. Volunteers will be trained at the beginning of their shift at the Frank Southern Ice Arena, 2100 S. Henderson St.

### **Contact Information:**

Kim Ecenbarger  
812-349-3739  
ecenbark@bloomington.in.gov  
www.bloomington.in.gov/parks

### **City of Bloomington Volunteer Network**

401 N. Morton St. Suite 260 Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network exists to mobilize volunteers to address community issues and build on community assets. It is our aim to inspire, support and celebrate volunteerism in our community.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** Community organizations need certain things to do their work, and to do it well. Some things are more obvious than others. For example, the Pinnacle School needs bookshelves, but did you know that they also need gardening supplies? Some items can be gently used - Pets Alive, for example, would love to have that animal carrier taking up room in your garage!

The items requested range from the no-cost to the big-ticket, but they all need someone to go to work to gather them up! Why not be that someone?

To organize a Holiday Wish List collection drive, first go to [www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer](http://www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer) to view the Holiday Wish List. Then organize a drive - large or small - within your school, family or faith community or take the list along shopping and add a few extra items to your cart. Contact the organizations involved and arrange a good time to deliver. Mission accomplished - you have made a difference in the community and it's fun to be Santa!

### **Contact Information:**

Bet Savich  
812-349-3472  
volunteer@bloomington.in.gov  
www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer

**Community Kitchen of Monroe County, Inc.**  
917 S. Rogers St. Bloomington, IN 47403

**Mission:** The Community Kitchen prepares, serves and distributes meals every day, Monday-Saturday to anyone in need. They provide a daily emergency meal service, snacks & meals to children attending at-risk youth agencies and through their Back Pack Buddies program.

### **November Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

A traditional Thanksgiving Meal will be served on Thanksgiving Day from 3-6 p.m. Bags of groceries will also be distributed.

### **December Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

A traditional Christmas Meal will be served on Christmas Day from 3-6 p.m. Bags of groceries will also be distributed.

### **Contact Information:**

Anni Brookshire  
812-332-0999  
assistantdirector@monroecommunitykitchen.com  
www.monroecommunitykitchen.com

### **Cry of the Children**

540 S. Curry Pike Bloomington, IN 47403

**Mission:** The mission of Cry of the Children is to improve the quality of life for adolescents in Bloomington by providing programs and services that enhance and promote the development of effective life and decision making skills.

### **November Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

Cry of the Children will be having our 4th Annual Thanksgiving Meal, November 13th 2-4 p.m at Bethel A.M.E Church at 302 N. Rogers, Bloomington, IN 47403. Contact Dellsie Boddie at 812-361-4059 or cryofthechildren@gmail.com if you are interested in making a donation or volunteering.

### **Contact Information:**

Dellsie Boddie  
812-361-4059  
cryofthechildren@gmail.com

### **Fair Trade Bloomington**

4498 E. Janet Drive Bloomington, IN 47401

**Mission:** Fair Trade Bloomington provides the opportunity to contribute to global poverty relief through education and promotion of products that adhere to fair trade principles.

### **December Holiday Volunteer Needs:**

Thursday, December 2nd and Friday, December 3rd, Students in Free Enterprise Fair Trade Sale, Indiana Memorial Union, Frangipani Room.

**See "NETWORK", next page**

## DREAMS

Continued from page 13

ment is that families often arrive with an immediate crisis: a disconnect notice in hand, threatened eviction or other emergency. Our first step as partners is to find help resolving that crisis so that the family can breathe more easily and begin thinking about the future they'd like to journey toward. Fortunately, Township Trustees, the SCCAP Energy Assistance Program and numerous faith communities generously provide assistance that can help people get past this initial crisis.

Barriers include limited education and job experience, disabilities, the exhaustion of single parenting on a low income, depression and other mental health issues, troubled relationships and felony records, as well as the systemic barriers confronting our communities: high housing costs, lack of living wage employment, lack of safe and reliable transportation and affordable childcare, a frustrating government benefit bureaucracy, public misperceptions

that paint all people in poverty with the same "deviant" brush, and the large loss of benefits that results when a family begins to achieve a small measure of financial success.

To address these barriers, I work with families on increasing their educational and skill levels, obtaining employment, budgeting, resolving relationship dilemmas, working on legal and credit problems, finding mental health support, learning about opportunities that exist to help people move ahead, and figuring out the personal patterns holding them back. I urge families to become involved in the community, not only as a way of building a support network, but also because being a part of changing the social and economic conditions that plague their lives is so empowering. I also serve on local committees addressing these community issues.

My first piece of advice to anyone struggling to make it is to NOT be

ashamed: most of this country struggles to juggle expenses in today's economy, where the "middle-class" has been rapidly shrinking. And most of us have made mistakes that limit us in some way. If you can remember that, it may make it easier for you to take this second piece of advice: ask for help as soon as you are aware that you are going to need it. If your electric bill grows to over \$1000.00, especially if you have already been disconnected, chances are that you will not be able to find enough organizations to assist with that amount. If you have already been evicted, it is more difficult to find help. Above all, hold tight to your dreams and resolve to achieve them.

Another hat I wear in my role at SCCAP is that of managing the Wheels to Work program. This is a car donation program that assists families with overcoming transportation barriers to attending school or getting to work. Families,

who must have an income, can purchase a vehicle at half the blue-book value and pay for it over time with no interest, with a payment schedule that they agree they can afford. These payments are used to make any small repairs necessary to donated vehicles before they are sold. The family must complete an application and a caseworker presents the family's situation to the Wheels to Work committee when a car becomes available.

Unfortunately, many families are in need of transportation assistance, and we currently have no donated cars. If you have a vehicle gathering dust in your garage that is in good running order, needing no more than minor repairs, please consider donating it to Wheels to Work; you can take a tax deduction and assist a family in moving ahead with their dreams.

## NETWORK

Continued from previous page

### Contact Information:

Mary Embry  
812-333-6871  
mcembry@indiana.edu  
www.fairtradebloomington.org

### Girls Incorporated of Monroe County

1108 W. 8th Street Bloomington, IN 47404  
**Mission:** Serving 500 girls in Monroe County, Girls Inc. provides exciting, research-driven programming and sound mentoring in a supportive all-girl environment to inspire all girls to be strong, smart, and bold.

### December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Holiday Hoopla (Sat, Dec. 4, 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.) throughout Fountain Square Mall. We warmly invite you and your family to join us in ringing in the holiday season at Holiday Hoopla, Girls Inc.'s annual joyous, family-oriented event! The \$5.00 ticket price includes a hot pancake breakfast in the Fountain Square Ballroom, photos with Santa, a "kids only" shopping area where kids get to shop for gifts for their family and nothing sells for over \$5.00, entertainment provided by local musicians, a raffle for great prizes, and the always popular gingerbread house event for the kids. Tickets can be purchased at Girls Inc. and will also be available at the door. Volunteers wanted! Contact: mdowling@monroe.girls-inc.org

### Contact Information:

Lee Ann Jourdan  
812-336-7313  
ljourdan@monroe.girls-inc.org  
www.bloomington.in.us/~girlsinc

### Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County

213 E. Kirkwood Avenue Bloomington, IN 47408  
**Mission:** Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County promotes home ownership by building houses in partnership with families in need of adequate housing. Their mission is to build simple, decent affordable homes with people in need.

### November/December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Habitat home builds take place on Saturdays in Nov. and Dec. Volunteers are always needed to help build or bring food to the build site. We also need office volunteers in December to help with our annual holiday mailing.

### Contact Information:

Fiona Taggart  
812-331-4069  
volunteers@monroecountyhabitat.org  
www.monroecountyhabitat.org

### Martha's House, Inc.

919 S. Rogers St., P.O. Box 2115 Bloomington, Indiana 47402  
**Mission:** The mission of Martha's House, Inc. is to provide safe shelter to individuals in crisis and experiencing homelessness.

**Holiday Collection Drive:** New socks, pocket calendars, gloves, bus tickets, toiletry items (i.e. shaving cream, tooth brushes, and small bottles of shampoo)

### November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Martha's House, Stepping Stones, Mother Hubbard's Cupboard, and Shalom Center host several events for Homelessness and Hunger Awareness week (Nov.15-22). These events include activities that build a community understanding of the issues and fund raising events that help support the four participating agencies.

### Contact Information:

Bobbie Summers  
812-332-1444

bsummers409@hotmail.com

### Middle Way House, Inc.

P. O. Box 95, Bloomington, IN 47402

**Mission:** To end violence, both structural and interpersonal in the lives of women and children. Middle Way House provides safe emergency shelter for women and their dependent children who are fleeing domestic violence.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** Warm coats, boots, clothing, shoes and sleepwear for women and children of all sizes and ages. These items may be new or gently used. We also need single/double easy wash blankets, single and double sheet sets and boxes of facial tissue.

**Adopt-A-Family:** We have families of all sizes ready for adoption. Call Liz Franklin at Middle Way House, 333-7404, to help make a family's Christmas brighter.

**December Holiday Volunteer Needs:** We need new volunteers in many of our programs throughout the winter and Holiday season. Our December volunteer training will be held Sat., Dec. 4, 2010. Please call Middle Way House for further information.

### Contact Information:

Clara Wilson  
812-333-7404  
pungomax@comcast.net  
www.middlewayhouse.org

### Monroe County United Ministries

827 W. 14th Court Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** Monroe County United Ministries provides quality affordable childcare for working families and basic needs assistance for those in crisis.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** MCUM's Winter Food Drive runs through the end of the year. Non-perishable food, cleaning supplies and hygiene products are welcome. Pickup can be arranged for large drives. Donations can be dropped off Monday-Friday and some Saturday mornings.

**Adopt-A-Family:** Donors can adopt a family enrolled by the childcare program by purchasing 3-5 gifts for each parent and child in the family. A list of family members and gift suggestions will be sent to you. You can also provide a holiday food basket instead of or in addition to gifts. Visit www.mcum.org or call Meri Reinhold at 812-339-3429 for more information.

### November/December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Winter Food Drive Helpers: Volunteers are needed to transport food drive donations from collection site to MCUM's pantry. Schedule is flexible but times are usually during business hours. Winter Food Drive Pantry Volunteers: Volunteers are needed to sort food donations in the Emergency Food Pantry. Volunteer anytime Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-4 p.m., and some Saturday mornings.

### Contact Information:

Cliff Edens  
812-339-3429  
mcumhelp@bloomington.in.us  
www.mcum.org

### Musical Arts Youth Orchestra

122 S. Walnut Street, Suite M Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** The Musical Arts Youth Orchestra's mission is to provide musical training to students of all levels and backgrounds, to promote excellence while fostering individual development, and to prepare students as contributing community members.

**Holiday Collection Drives:** MAYO Holiday

Chamber Orchestra and Jazz concert, Dec. 11 at Rhinos. Giving Tree \$5 suggested donations requested. We need help with planning, silent auction items, toy collection drive, and more.

### November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

MAYO "Musical Legends" Concert, Nov. 14 at the Beford Performing Arts Center and Nov. 15 in Martinsville, IN. Pre-event help needed with program book and ads. Event help needed as ushers and greeters. Post-event help needed in office (e.g. thank you letters)

### December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

MAYO Holiday Chamber Orchestra and Jazz concert, Dec. 11 at Rhinos. We need help with planning, silent auction items, toy collection drive, and more.

### Contact Information:

Kristen Bellisario  
317-441-4640 or 812-334-3100 ext. 106  
kristen@mayomusic.org  
www.mayomusic.org

### Native American Community Center of Bloomington, Inc.

**Mission:** The Native American Community Center of Bloomington is a nonprofit serving serving American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians and educating the general public about indigenous peoples.

### November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

The Native American Community Center offers resources to help educators be sure they are teaching accurate, up-to-date information about American Indians. Volunteers are needed throughout the month of November (Native American Heritage Month) to help promote our small, free lending library to K-12 educators by creating letters and offering to meet with individual teachers to make recommendations on resources and lesson plans. Schedule is flexible. Help is also needed for the Native American Heritage Month opening reception on Nov. 4 from 4-7pm. Volunteers are needed to help pick up and arrange food and decorate before the event, and to help clean up afterwards. The event will be held in the City Hall/Showers Building atrium.

### December Holiday Volunteer Needs:

GRANT WRITING: Volunteers are needed to work on our grant writing drive for December in both drafting and editing capacities. Volunteers should have prior experience with grant writing and be knowledgeable about or willing to learn about the needs of the local Native American Community. Schedule is flexible.

### Contact Information:

Rebecca Riall  
812-391-3457  
volunteer@naccbloomington.org  
www.naccbloomington.org

### Salvation Army

111 N. Rogers St. PO BOX 2117 Bloomington, IN 47404

**Mission:** The mission of the Salvation Army is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

**Adopt-A-Child:** The Salvation Army's Angel Tree Pick up an Angel tag at locations throughout Monroe County to provide a Christmas for a child without. (Nov. 10-Dec. 14) Angel Trees can be found at College Mall, Walmart and additional locations throughout Monroe County. Please visit our website for more information. Please choose your favorite tag and purchase toys and clothing for that child in need. Return all toys and clothing

to the location from which you selected the tag or directly to The Salvation Army.

**November Holiday Volunteer Needs:** Assist with the coat give away and application process, volunteers needed the first week of November to assist families in filling out an application for Holiday assistance. Also, traditional kettles and holiday bells will ring in a new season starting Nov. 18 -Dec. 24th at sites around Monroe County. Come out even for just a while to help spread the cheer of the season with The Salvation Army. Call 336-4310 or reserve bell-ringing shifts at The Salvation Army's website.

**December Holiday Volunteer Needs:** Toy Sorting: Thousands of toys will fill the gymnasium at The Salvation Army, and volunteers are needed to help sort and arrange. Day and Evening shifts begin Dec. 7. Call 336-4310 or reserve shifts at The Salvation Army's website. Distribution of gifts and food volunteers needed Dec. 21 and Dec. 22nd

### Contact Information:

Courtney Grau  
812-336-4310 ext. 12  
courtney\_grau@usc.salvationarmy.org  
www.corps.salvationarmyindiana.org/bloomington

### Shalom Community Center

620 S. Walnut Street Bloomington, IN 47401

**Mission:** The Shalom Community Center is a safe daytime shelter and resource center for people experiencing homelessness and poverty.

**Holiday Collection Drive:** Shalom Community Center offers a Holiday Gift Program for children of families living in poverty. We anticipate up to 500 children this year. To become a donor call Pam Kinnaman, Director of Volunteer Services, at 334-5734 or by email to pam@shalomcommunitycenter.org. Thank you in advance for adding to the magic of the season!

**Adopt-A-Family:** It is not necessary to get something for the parents but, if you choose to, we suggest a grocery store gift card that can be used to help with the purchase of the holiday meal. Bring gifts to the Shalom Community Center administration office on the third floor of the First United Methodist Church, 219 E. Fourth St. Dec. 1st- Dec. 3rd.

### November Holiday Volunteer Needs:

Already prepared traditional Thanksgiving food (turkey, pies, casseroles, etc) that we will serve on Thanksgiving morning. Kitchen volunteers are also needed to work on Thanksgiving from 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., and the Friday after Thanksgiving from 7:30 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.

**December Holiday Volunteer Needs:** Once the IU students leave for exams and winter break, we lose a great number of volunteers. We need local people that will volunteer at least short-term in the kitchen and at our front desk from mid December through the end of January. If you could give us at least two-hours that will help us a great deal.

### Contact Information:

Pam Kinnaman  
812-334-5734  
pam@shalomcommunitycenter.org  
www.shalomcommunitycenter.org



# 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 <http://safety-net-newspaper.com/>. Several of the agencies and services described provide multiple forms of aid. Unless otherwise noted all services and agencies are located in Bloomington.

## Addiction Counseling

### Amethyst House

**Address:** 645 N. Walnut St.

**Phone:** (812) 336-3570

**Web:** [www.amethysthouse.org](http://www.amethysthouse.org)

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

**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](http://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](http://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.

## Clothing, furniture, housewares

### Backstreet Missions Thrift Store

**Address:** 1911 S. Walnut St.

**Phone:** (812) 333-3341

### Monroe County United Ministries

**Address:** 827 W. 14 Ct.

**Phone:** (812) 339-3429

**Volunteer Contact:** Rebecca Gordan ([812]353-9150; [mcmuhelp@bloomington.in.us](mailto:mcmuhelp@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](http://www.mysistersclosetofmonroeco.org)

**Volunteer Contact:** JoAnne Bunnage ([812]335-6603; [jbunnage@indiana.edu](mailto: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](mailto: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](http://www.bloomingtonsvdp.org)

**Volunteer Contact:** Scott Alber, ([812]335-1280 [volunteer@bloomingtonsvdp.org](mailto: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](http://www.abilitiesunlimited.net)

**Volunteer Contact:** Lynne Argent ([812]332-1620; [au@abilitiesunlimited.net](mailto: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](mailto:j.gilbertson@insightbb.com))

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

### Options

**Address:** 200 E. Winslow Rd.

**Phone:** (812) 332-9615

**Web:** [www.optionsfbl.com](http://www.optionsfbl.com)

**Volunteer Contact:** Karen Scherer, ([kscherer@optionsfbl.com](mailto: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 customize 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](http://www.palstherapy.org)

**Volunteer Contact:** Jan Gavin ([812]325-7863; [jbgavin@indiana.edu](mailto: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](http://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](http://www.stonebelt.org)

**Volunteer Contact:** Amy Jackson (332-2168 x314; [ajackson@stonebelt.org](mailto: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

### El Centro Comunal Latino

**Address:** 303 E Kirkwood Avenue, Room 11

**Phone:** (812) 355-7513

**Web:** www.elcentrocomunal.org

**About:** CCL is a grassroots, community-based organization that seeks to provide an accessible and safe space for all Latinos, with a focus on Spanish-speaking people, to find information, access to resources and a place to hold community events. CCL's work includes tutoring services for all ages, the medical interpretation network, direct service, Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program, the Legal Advice Project, Informate—series of educational presentations, health programming, and the Bienvenidos program; a support group that helps immigrants acculturate to life in the United States.

### 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:** 811 West 2nd Street

**Phone:** (812) 333-4001

**Web:** www.vimmonroecounty.org

**Volunteer Contact:** Shelley Sallee ([812]333-4001 x109; 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:** 338 S. Washington St.

**Phone:** (812) 333-7404 (admin phone), (812) 336-0846 (crisis line)

**Web:** www.middlewayhouse.org

**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.

### 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 (Intact Families/Adults)

### Bloomington Catholic Worker

**Address:** 573 & 577 Graham Place near Bloomington High School

**Phone:** (812) 339-4456

**About:** We offer short-term, home-based hospitality to people facing homelessness.

## 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 or 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

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

## Legal and court-related services

### Community Justice & Mediation Center

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

**Phone:** (812) 339-1551

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

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

**About:** Programs include the Victim-Offender Reconciliation Program, Shoplifter's Alternative Program, Workshops, Trainings, and Community Mediation Services for

neighborhood, school, family or business conflicts.

### Legal Services Organization of Indiana, Inc. Bloomington

**Address:** 214 S. College Ave.

**Phone:** (812) 339-7668

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

### Monroe County Court Appointed Special Advocates

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

**Phone:** (812) 339-1551

**Web:** www.monroementalhealth.com/casa.asp

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

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

### Monroe County Prosecutor—Victim Assistance Program

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

**Phone:** (812) 349-2670

**Web:** www.co.monroe.in.us

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

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

## Meals and pantries (no cost)

### Meals

#### Area 10 Agency on Aging

**Address:** 630 West Edgewood Drive, Ellettsville, IN 47429

**Phone:** (812) 876-3383

**Web:** www.area10agency.org

**About:** Area 10 Agency on Aging offers 3 main nutrition and food services for senior citizens.

**Congregate Meals** — We offer congregate meals at 11 am at the following locations: Spencer Senior Center, Fairview United Methodist Church—Bloomington, Cambridge Square Apts.—Bloomington, Unionville Senior Center, and Maple Shades Apts.—Ellettsville. Seniors must be over 60, and a \$2 donation is requested.

**Mobile Meals** — We home deliver meals to seniors who are 60 years of age or older and

who are unable to prepare meals for themselves due to illness or disability. A \$2 donation is requested to help cover the cost of the program. For more information seniors can contact Mary Boutain at 812.935.2505 or e-mail her at mboutain@area10agency.org.

**Food Pantry** — We provide seniors with two bags of groceries and frozen food each month. Seniors must be over 60 and can call 812-876-3383 to request an application for eligibility.

#### 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:** 573 & 577 Graham Place near Bloomington High School

**Phone:** (812) 339-4456

**About:** We share a home-based dinner every night of the week at 6:00 on the southside to which all are welcome. Thursday nights have the largest feast. Please call so we can direct you to the correct house.

#### 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 afterschool 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:** 620 South Walnut Street

**Phone:** (812) 334-5728

**Web:** www.shalomcommunitycenter.org

**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 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. 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

#### Area 10 Agency on Aging

*See meals and pantries — meals*

#### Hoosier Hills Food Bank

**Address:** 2333 W. Industrial Park Drive

**Phone:** (812) 334-8374

**Web:** www.hhfoodbank.org

**Volunteer Contact:** Kai Westerfield (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.mhfoodpantry.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.

**First United Methodist Church**  
**Address:** 219 E. 4th Street  
**Hours:** Wednesdays, 3:00-5:30 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.  
**Township Trustees Food Pantries—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

**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:** Contact Kathy Delaney Willett, Director of Outreach and Enrollment  
**About:** Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana helps children in Monroe and Owen counties reach their potential through professionally supported, one to one relationships with measurable impact.

**Bloomington Boys and Girls Club**  
**Address:** 311 S. Lincoln St.  
**Phone:** (812) 332-5311  
**Web:** www.bgcbloomington.org  
**Volunteer Contact:** Lily Kleinlein ([812] 334-2828 x232; lklein@bigsindian.org)  
**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:** Lucy Berger, Director of Operations ([812] 336-7313; lberger@monroe.girls-inc.org)  
**About:** Girls Inc. of Monroe County, is an affiliate of a national youth organization dedicated to inspiring girls to be strong, smart, and bold through after school programming, organized sports, and summer/winter camps. Provides programming for girls ages 6 to 18. 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, audiovisual 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.