



Safety-Net

August 2005
Vol. 1, Issue 2

Housing Edition

Welcome to our second issue!

About Safety-Net: Safety-Net is a multi-agency quarterly publication about the social service agencies in Bloomington, as well as other non-profit groups, and programs provided by the City of Bloomington that enhance the quality of life for Bloomington residents. It is brought to you by the Shalom Community Center in cooperation with the other social service agencies. Suggestions regarding Safety-Net are most welcome. Please transmit comments to the Safety-Net editor at shalom@bloomington.in.us and place Safety-Net Comments on the subject line.

Focus of this issue: In addition to providing news and information about the many agencies and groups that provide social

services, the first section of each issue of Safety-Net will have a focus. The focus of this issue is the many programs that provide (1) affordable housing, (2) prevent homelessness, (3) aid people in home repair, and (4) provide transitional housing for homeless youth, as well as guidance and support

Sponsorship by the City of Bloomington: We are pleased to announce that this and subsequent issues of Safety-Net are financially sponsored by the City of Bloomington.

Access to earlier issues: Earlier issues of Safety-Net can be accessed at the Shalom Community Center Web site: www.shalomcommunitycenter.org.

A word from the mayor

By Mark Kruzan, Mayor of Bloomington

Bloomington is a great place to live for most of us. Social service agencies, other nonprofits, local businesses, governmental entities, and volunteers work together every day to make our city the idyllic place most people consider it to be.

But it's important to recognize that there's a Bloomington too many people don't know.

A city where more than hundreds of local school kids qualify for subsidized school lunches. Home to countless underemployed citizens working two or more jobs to make ends meet. A place

where too many people are one illness, car problem, or childcare need away from being unemployed or homeless.

Whether a matter of "out of sight, out of mind," ignorance, or perhaps even a sense of shame, some people tend not to acknowledge Bloomington's homeless population.

I have been very saddened by contacts I've had from people telling me the City needs to "clean up Kirkwood" as though our homeless citizens were part of a litter problem.

See "Mayor," page two

Featured services and agencies

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About affordable housing

By Michael Reinke, Executive Director, Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues

Like good health, most of us only worry about our housing when it is in serious jeopardy. Unfortunately, far too many people have no place to call home. Many more are considered "housing insecure" or paying more than a third of their income in rent.

While the problem of homelessness is often considered to be "urban" and unaffordable housing an issue largely of the East and West Coasts, more than forty percent of Indiana Rental Households are housing insecure, and one fifth pay more than half of their income in rent. In communities such as Bloomington and Lafayette, the cost of housing and the portion of the population unable to afford housing are among the highest in the state, even higher than urban areas such as Indianapolis.

In and of itself, housing insecurity is a difficult problem to face for any individual, family, or community. At the same time, affordable housing is often either the key to solving the most pernicious problems facing our state or the most significant hurdle we need to overcome.

The problem is perhaps most pronounced in the nation's fastest growing homeless demographic: homeless children. While poverty among our nation's elderly has consistently seen reductions and improvements, the same can not be said for our nation's children. More children live in poverty than any other age group. Living in poverty, and living in substandard housing exacts a terrible toll on our nation's children.

The incidence of health problems is just one example. A recent study of four family shelters found that while eight percent of children in the general population suffer from asthma, one in four children in shelters have diagnosed asthma. An additional fifteen percent of children have undiagnosed asthma. This situation exists despite the fact that asthma is among the easiest illnesses to diagnose and among the easiest illnesses to treat. Asthma is the leading reason both for children to miss days of school and to be admitted into the emergency room.

Lack of affordable housing doesn't just cost our communities in the form of

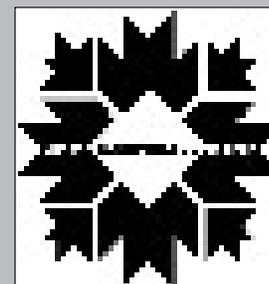
emergency-room visits and poor ISTEP scores. The absence of affordable housing means we pay more for solutions to pressing social issues.

A recent study by the Child Welfare League of America found that at least thirty percent of the children currently in foster care could be reunited with their families if permanent supportive housing were available. In Indiana, foster care for these children will cost the state \$45 million dollars. Permanent supportive housing with supportive services and no time limit to move would cost the state \$9 million for the same number of families. Savings to taxpayer would be approximately \$36 million dollars.

Fortunately, on the federal, state, and local level initiatives are being presented and actions are being taken to address the problem of affordable housing.

For the first time, we have federal legislation proposed to provide a permanent source of funding for a national housing trust fund. This fund (<http://www.nhtf.org>) would provide the necessary matching funds for local housing projects and could provide an incentive for state and local governments to establish and fund their own trust funds.

In Indiana, several organizations, including the Indiana Association for Community Economic Development (www.iaced.org), the State Chapter of Habitat for Humanity (contact your local Habitat chapter), and the Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues (www.ichhi.org), have come together to support Indiana's effort to make housing affordable. While Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, and Kentucky all help their residents in the effort to provide affordable housing, Indiana does not contribute any state dollars to the effort to house Hoosiers.



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

See "Reinke," page two

Housing definitions

HUD (US Department of Housing and Urban Development)

Provides funding for housing programs across the country. Does not offer assistance directly to individuals, just to agencies who then develop and operate housing programs.

Section 8

A voucher program run through local Housing Authorities. An individual or family applies at the Housing Authority and when approved can go to any landlord who accepts the voucher. The household pays 30% of their gross income for rent, and Section 8 pays the remainder up to Fair Market Rent.

Affordable Housing

Affordable Housing is determined by Fair Market Rent. Any house or apartment with rent and utilities falling under FMR is considered Affordable Housing. Landlords can receive funding specifically to develop Affordable Housing.

Fair Market Rent

Fair Market Rent (FMR) is the amount set by the Federal government that determines what housing (rent and utilities) should cost in each county or municipal area of a state.

FMR in Bloomington:

Studio \$449.00
1 bdrm \$520.00
2 bdrm \$634.00

3 bdrm \$901.00
4 bdrm \$931.00

Public Housing

Public Housing, like Section 8, is operated through local Housing Authorities. However, instead of the household picking a landlord, the Housing Authority is the landlord. Each household pays 30% of gross income for rent and utilities.

Tax Credit Housing

Tax credit housing is affordable housing developed with tax credits offered to investors in a non-profit. Rather than rent being based on income, the rent is set on an affordable level and only households making under a certain Income are eligible to rent.

Supportive Housing

Supportive Housing Program (SHP) are programs that work similar to Section 8 in that households pay only 30% of their gross income for rent. However, SHP is operated through individual agencies, and also includes a component of case work to assist household in moving off the program. These can be time-limited or permanent.

Shelter Plus Care

Shelter Plus Care (S+C) is a program for chronically homeless, disabled individuals. Like SHP, it is operated through an individual agency and includes case management as a component of housing.

Mayor

Continued from page one

The focus of those complainants - the focus of all of

us - must be on social service support, education, affordable housing, and employment opportunities.

Whether your motivation is human compassion or wallet-based, empowering all citizens to achieve their potential and become or remain productive members of our community is the right thing to do.

For Bloomington to create a diverse economy, we have to develop affordable housing. We want people who work here to be able to afford to live here.

There are practical ways in which affordable housing options can be created, such as:

*making affordability of residential living a part of tradeoffs in housing developments;

* incorporating affordable housing in City historic preservation initiatives;

*partnering with community groups such as the Bloomington Community Foundation, Habitat For Humanity, Housing Solutions, and Bloomington Restorations to develop new housing opportunities; and

*launching redevelopment efforts to pursue converting neglected properties into affordable housing.

Residential developers, neighborhood leaders, university representatives, city personnel, and experts can help guide the city through the process.

A real danger Bloomington faces is a class of citizens with no chance to break the bonds of poverty. A loss of an entire group of people's energies is a moral failure as well as a drain on limited resources and a waste of a much-needed skilled workforce.

I appreciate all you do in recognition of the fact that human development is key to economic growth.

Stepping Stones, Inc.

By Sheri Benham, Executive Director, Stepping Stones, Inc.

339-9771

shbenham@indiana.edu

Stepping Stones, Inc. is a new nonprofit organization in Monroe County serving youth from 16 up to 21 years of age who are experiencing homelessness. Our transitional housing programs are designed to provide a structure where young people are given the opportunity to live by themselves but have adults "on-call" who can provide guidance, support, and a safety net. Our philosophy is that transitional housing needs to be a means to an end. Residents are given the opportunity to live on their own while developing skills to become self-sufficient.

Residents receive free rent and utilities the first couple of months. As they progress through the program, they start paying a portion of expenses until they are paying 100%. It is a voluntary program and applicants are screened for their needs and level of commitment in becoming self-sufficient. The program is structured for them to have the experience of living on their own with the knowledge that an adult lives next door. The ultimate step will be for the resident to graduate from the program and obtain permanent housing.

We are still in the developmental phase of operations but during this first year we started a pilot program, the Independent Living Program-Westside Apartment. This apartment is located in the Prospect Hill neighborhood. It is a one-bedroom apartment and a 19-year-old mother and her six-month old daughter are residing there. Funding has come from community donations. We recently received news that we have been awarded a Housing Trust Fund grant for \$10,000 which will help pay for this program.

Our core program will be the Supportive Housing Program-College Mall Apartments. We partnered with Youth Services Bureau and have been awarded a federal grant through the HUD to provide housing + supportive services for up to six youth. The target date for this program is August. We will begin recruiting youth for this program in mid-July. Over the summer, we will be at the Shalom Community Center on Mondays and Tuesdays from 12-1 to talk with youth who might be interested in applying to the program.

For more information please contact Sheri Benham, Executive Director at 339-9771 or shbenham@indiana.edu.

Reinke

Continued from page one

Finally, grassroots work is being done to make

housing more affordable in the greater Bloomington Area. One proposal is inclusive-zoning legislation, which would require either the construction of affordable housing in multi-house developments of a certain size or contributions to a local housing trust fund.

Carlsbad California (<http://www.ci.carlsbad.ca.us/housing/devguide.html>), and Santa Barbara, (<http://www.countyofsb.org/housing/housingdevelopment.asp>), are examples of what local communities have done to promote affordable housing. For more information on what you can do, contact your local housing organization or coalition or consider becoming a member of ICHHI.

Keep Advocating!

Shalom fights family homelessness

Shalom Community Center
www.shalomcommunitycenter.org
 (812) 334-5728

The Shalom Community Center is starting a new project to prevent families from becoming homeless as well as finding homes for homeless families. It is called the Family Homelessness Prevention Project. The program will utilize existing resources through collaboration with community partners. There are two components to the program: (1) Homeless Prevention component for families at risk of becoming homeless, and (2) Locating Housing for homeless families.

Prevention is defined here as helping those families at risk of homelessness to stabilize their tenancy. The Prevention component will prevent 100 families from losing their homes during the first year. Activities include:

*Early identification of at-risk families. Principal partners in this effort will be the Monroe County Community School Corporation and the Monroe County Office of Family and Children (the state agency which administers the Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, Federal Food Stamp, and Medicaid programs). These two agencies serve low-income families that are at a high risk of becoming homeless.

Homeless Prevention Component

See "Shalom," page seven

Habitat lends a helping hand

By Kerry Thompson Patillo, Executive Director/Director of Ministry, Habitat for Humanity

Habitat for Humanity of Monroe County
1119 N. Lindbergh Dr.
Bloomington, IN 47404
www.bloomington.in.us/~habitat
(812) 331-4069

Habitat for Humanity has been building homes in Monroe County since 1988, and is an affiliate of Habitat for Humanity International; a non-profit, ecumenical, Christian housing ministry. Habitat for Humanity International sees to eliminate poverty housing from the world, and to make decent shelter a matter of conscience and action. Habitat invites people of all backgrounds, races, and religions to build houses together in partnership with families in need.

Habitat's work is accomplished at the community level by affiliates-- independent, locally-run, nonprofit organizations. The Monroe County affiliate was founded in 1988 and has built 57 homes in partnership with Monroe County residents.

Habitat works through volunteer labor and donations of money and materials to build simple, decent homes with the help of the homeowner families. Habitat houses are sold to partner families at no profit, and financed with affordable, no-interest loans. The homeowners' monthly mortgage payments are used to build still more Habitat houses.

In addition to a down payment and the monthly mortgage payments, homeowners invest hundreds of hours of their own labor-- sweat equity-- into building their Habitat house and the homes of others.

Habitat homes are affordable for low-income families because there is no profit included in the sale price and no interest charged on the mortgage. Mortgages vary from 15 to 30 years. A home in Monroe County--where costs are Indiana's highest--costs \$52,000.

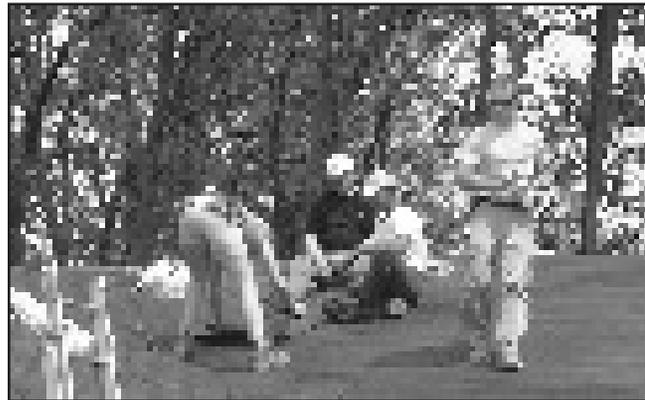
Our family selection committee chooses homeowners based on their level of need, their willingness to become partners in the program and their ability to repay the no-interest loan. Every affiliate follows a nondiscriminatory policy of family selection. Neither race nor religion is a factor in choosing the families who receive Habitat homes.

The need for decent, affordable housing is great in the Bloomington/Monroe County community. Housing costs in Monroe County are the highest in Indiana. In 1996 the median cost of a home in Indianawas \$85,000; in Monroe County it was \$107,000. Rental units are no exception; Monroe County has the most expensive rental prices in the state. For many working people in our community, home ownership is simply out of reach without Habitat for Humanity.

Volunteers are needed to help construct homes Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays throughout the summer and fall. To work on site, volunteers must be 16 years of age. No long-term commitment or building skills required; just come out for a day and learn! Contact Sean at 331-4069 or volunteerhabitat@bloomington.in.us for more information.



Habitat for Humanity volunteers work on a project that will give a Monroe County family a new home.



Recipient thanks Habitat

By Hermine Cohen

I was 45 when I moved into my Habitat house. Without Habitat, I don't know if I would have ever owned my own home.

The house was built by me, my two sons, family, friends and a community of volunteers. Before getting our Habitat home we had moved 11 times in 16 years, and our rent was double what we now pay for the same amount of space. Having my own home has meant security and stability for me and my two sons. It has given me the confidence to return to school and complete my education.

My oldest son recently graduated from college and we are all very proud of him. Next year my younger son will be a senior in high school and plans to attend college after he graduates. Along with the house we also joined a community of other Habitat homeowners and the Habitat "family." I now volunteer to help other Habitat families build their homes and participate in committee meetings to help choose families that qualify for Habitat homes.

The skills I have learned building my own home and helping others to do the same have been invaluable.



HAND helps in more ways than one

Susie Johnson, HAND director

401 N. Morton Street, Ste 130
Bloomington, IN 47404
812-349-3420

Website: <http://bloomington.in.gov/hand/>

The City of Bloomington Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND) Department's mission is to enhance the quality of life for Bloomington residents by developing programs, services and partnerships with public and private organizations to preserve community character, and to promote safe and affordable housing and neighborhood vitality. Since its inception HAND has developed and implemented many programs that go to the heart of caring for Bloomington's housing needs.

HAND runs the City's rental inspection program. Every residential rental in

Bloomington must be registered with and inspected on a cyclical basis by HAND. The inspection system is based on the 2000 International Property Maintenance Code. HAND also addresses landlord and tenant complaints.

HAND also is responsible for the City's historic preservation efforts. In the past year, the City has adopted a demolition delay ordinance that gives the community time to consider locally designating a property that is slated for demolition. Should local designation be approved, the property could then be placed under protection and saved from demolition.

Bloomington has a relatively large aging housing stock with 25% of the houses built prior to 1940. Much of this housing has had deferred maintenance. To help those homeowners with incomes

below 80 percent area median income (AMI), HAND has the Owner Occupied Rehabilitation (OOR) program. This program helps families stay in their homes, in their neighborhoods and remain part of the community. The OOR program has been active since the creation of Community Development Block Grant, in the early 1970s.

One of HAND's Program Managers works directly with the home owner to identify essential code repairs. Once this list is compiled, the project is put out to bid to approved contractors. The home owner then selects the contractor. The Program Manager is on site to manage the construction process.

When the project is complete a mortgage is taken out on the property. If the home owner makes 50 percent or less of AMI

(a one-person household at 50 percent AMI = \$20,700), the loan is deferred and requires no monthly payment, but is repaid when the occupant no longer lives in the home. If the home owner makes more than 50 percent AMI, the loan is repaid in monthly installments at zero percent interest over a one-year period of time.

HAND has several other housing assistance programs; Emergency Home Repair, Home Modification for Accessible Living, the Home Buyers Club and direct housing counseling.

If you or someone you know could use the help of HAND please call 812-349-3420. Assistance is limited (due to funding sources) to in-city residents.

YSB offers safe places for area youth

By David Torneo, Clinical Coordinator, Youth Services Bureau

615 S. Adams Street
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 349-2506

Website: www.youthservicesbureau.net

The Youth Services Bureau (YSB) operates a Youth Shelter that provides short term residential care and crisis intervention for youths ages 8 to 17. Services are provided for runaway, homeless, and youth in crisis or abusive situations at home. Services also include 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.

The Youth Network is a YSB prevention program in partnership with the Asset Building Coalition, that helps to create and support student coalition groups in each

middle school and one collective student coalition at the high school level.

Project Safe Place

In addition to crisis counseling services, YSB operates Project Safe Place of Monroe and Greene Counties, a community-wide outreach service for runaways and at-risk youth in crisis situations. Throughout Monroe and Greene Counties, dozens of businesses and community locations have volunteered to be part of the Safe Place Network. These Safe Places are identified by the bright yellow Safe Place logo. A youth can enter a Safe Place at any time and ask for help. Within a few minutes a trained volunteer arrives to meet the youth and assist in defusing the crisis. In most cases, the volunteer brings the youth to the Youth Services Bureau shelter where staff welcome the youth and provide for his or her immediate needs - food, warmth, rest, etc. Together they begin to work toward a solution.



Middle Way House provides housing, employment

By Charlotte Zietlow

Web site: www.bloomington.in.us/~mwhouse
24 Hour Crisis Line: (812) 336-0846

Middle Way House, Inc. has been providing services for victims of domestic violence since 1981. At first it was an emergency shelter, then more services were added until today MWH offers an exceptional array of programs: case management, children's advocacy, legal advocacy, crisis intervention, including On Scene Advocates who go the scenes of domestic violence police calls or the hospital emergency room (at the request of victims), support groups, child care, classes in life skills and art projects, transitional housing (The Rise)-and even jobs.

Most women who leave scenes of domestic violence face some sort of eco-

nomics crisis-they have to find a job, and they have to have sustained employment to take care of themselves and their children. Many have not recently been part of the work force. Many have not got their GED. Most have to have day care, and a reliable car and some sort of health care. With all of these challenges sustained employment has not been an easy task.

Since 1996 Middle Way House has had an economic development program aimed at assisting women who are victims of domestic violence in becoming economically self-sufficient. The first project was a collaborative effort with the Small Business Development Center, the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association, the City of Bloomington and

local banks. And resulted in a micro-enterprise program. Initially this was the Bloomington Area Microenterprise Initiative (BAMI), and now has become SEED Corp. Since 1997 this program has offered a Small Business Planning Course for would-be entrepreneurs. If they graduate and develop a feasible business plan, they have access to loan funds. While a number of Middle Way House women have taken this course, the program is open to any individuals interested in starting their own business. Over 450 have finished the course.

In 1997 Middle Way House launched Confidential Document Destruction (CDD), a mobile shredding service. This has produced an average of five jobs, in which women learn to drive a truck, shred

and bale documents, meet schedules, interact with customers, keep records and, at the same time, divert over 1500 tons of paper from the landfill to be recycled.

In 2002 Middleway Food Works started serving healthy, tasty fresh foods at the Children's Village to 45 infants and toddlers. Within months Head Start became a customer, as well, a second kitchen was rented at the First United Methodist Church. That was followed by contracts with the Bloomington Developmental Learning Center, Parents Day Out, Area 10 Agency on Aging and, most recently, the IU Campus Child Care program. Women are learning how to cook, from scratch, to meet a schedule, to work with customers, and in this business, too, they are learning to become good employees.

See "Middle Way," page 6

Bloomington Housing Authority offers help

By Jennifer J. Osterholt, Executive Director, Bloomington Housing Authority



Crestmont Community is one of the housing services offered by the BHA.

1007 N. Summit Street
339-3491

<http://cgi.hoosier.net/cgi-bin/cgiwrap/uwmonroe/viewentry?id=27>

What is a public housing authority? I have been asked this question many times over the years. A Public Housing Authority may be described as a public corporation operating under State Statute with federal contracts.

To create public housing authorities, most state legislatures were required to pass "enabling" legislation. All 50 states have adopted this legislation. State law determines such matters as the number of commissioners to serve on the board, the general powers and restrictions for the PHA and the appointing official for commissioners.

Generally speaking state law establishing and governing the activities of PHAs will:

- *Describe the need for housing and redevelopment authorities.
- *Dictate the title of the agency.
- *Provide a general description of the power of these authorities.
- *State that authorities are run by Commissioners. The Commissioners are then responsible for hiring the Executive Director.
- *Specify how many Commissioners will serve on the Board.
- *State who appoints the Commissioners and the length of term of office. (In Indiana the Mayor has the right to appoint all members of the Board and state statute provides for four year staggered terms.)
- *State how a locality can create a PHA, which is normally done by passing a city or county ordinance or resolution.
- *Determine the rules governing conduct of the meetings.

Many people think PHAs are the federal government and PHA employees are federal employees. They are not. The primary link to the federal government is through the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) which pays the debt service, provides operating subsidies in some cases and provides guidelines and regulations for the PHA's operations.

The contractual relationship is through an Annual Contributions Contract, in which HUD promises to fund the PHA developments as long as the PHA operates the programs or sites according to HUD rules.

Even though the state passes legislation to enable a PHA to exist, the PHA still needs to "get on record" with the legal documents that must be submitted to the state. These legal documents are generally put together in the format of an Organizational Transcript. They contain the Oaths of Office for the Commissioners, the Articles of Incorporation, the By Laws, the Minutes of the Organizational Meeting, and the approvals required of the governing body.

A Cooperation Agreement is executed between the city or local government and the PHA. This Agreement requires the local government provide the PHA with the same level of municipal services it provides all others. It also includes a provision for a Payment in Lieu of Taxes for public housing developments.



Photos by Pam Kinnaman

The Bloomington Housing Authority currently administers several HUD funded programs as well as several local grants.

HUD Funded Programs:

*The BHA owns and operates 310 units of public housing consisting of three developments, Crestmont - built in 1967, Reverend Butler Apartments - built in 1972 and Walnut Woods Apartments - built in 1982. Residents pay rent based on income, thus we provide affordable housing for income eligible residents of Bloomington.

See "BHA," page six

Resident learns self-sufficiency

By Marie, former BHA client

Applying for section 8 was one of the most life changing choices that I ever had the pleasure to make. When my name finally came up on the waiting list, I went to a meeting to learn about all of the things that I needed to do; how to fill out papers, how to talk to landlords, and other tid bits of information that I would need to find a home to rent. Three of the most important words that I heard at this meeting were Self-sufficiency program. When I heard these, I knew that this is what I wanted. I didn't want to have to depend on someone else for everything. I wanted to be able to take care of my daughter and myself on my own.

On the self sufficiency program, Sandy Clothier helped me to identify what I wanted to do with my life. She helped me to focus on specific goals so I could not only take off in one direction, but continue in that direction until I reached my destination.

The people at the Bloomington Housing Authority provided the resources and support I needed to reach my goals. In fact, the program became more than a source for help, they became a part of my life. They shared in my most important life experiences. They shared in the joy when I got married. They were there for the excitement when my second child was born, and again when my third came into the world. They not only encouraged me while I was in school, but rejoiced with me when I was accepted into the nursing program and again when I graduated from nursing school. In a way, they became a special part of my family.

I am thankful that my family is doing well. Even though things will be hard at first, I am glad to say that we are finally self-sufficient. In spite of this exciting new chapter that we are about to embark on, I feel some sadness. Sadness, knowing that many of the fine relationships that were planted and nurtured during my time with this program will not be the same.

Martha's House plans family homeless shelter

Jodi Tobias, Executive Director, Martha's House

PO Box 2115
336-2597

Homelessness is a devastating experience for many people in this country. In Indiana alone, it is estimated that 18,000 people are homeless on any given night. Unfortunately, one of the fastest growing segments of the homeless population is families with children. Poverty and the lack of affordable housing are the principal causes of family homelessness.

This problem is prominent in Bloomington because there are no shelters for homeless families. If a woman is experiencing domestic violence, she and her children can receive services at Middle Way House. However if there is no domestic violence, the family consists of two parents or a father with children; there are few places that can help. Families in this situation are referred to churches, township trustees, and family shelters located in other communities.

Martha's House is the only emergency

shelter in the area serving all sub-populations of adults experiencing homelessness in Bloomington. Expansions are now underway to serve families experiencing homelessness by opening an emergency family shelter.

Homelessness can have negative consequences on family life, frequently resulting in the separation of family members. Grants have been awarded to Martha's House from the Jack Hopkins Social Service Funding program and the Cinergy Foundation to provide start up funds to open a family shelter that allows all members of the family to stay together.

Negotiations are underway with the Monroe County Commissioners and Bloomington Hospital to operate facilities they own as family shelters. Martha's House hopes to open one facility by this fall and the other by late spring 2006.

Several members of Fresh Hope Mission Church have volunteered to help renovate one of the structures. However, additional aid is still needed. Ways to help include:

Why must I exist
among all this hate,
the bigotry and prejudice,
can this be my fate?

Where are the rainbows,
within my mind's eye,
these illusions of love,
can this be a lie?

This utopia I search for
I can't find a clue.
Seems like it forever eludes me,
Is it just a few?

It seems like for ages
on this cruel, heartless trail,
constant obstacles and grief.
Can this really be hell?

I try not to lose faith,
keep trying to go on.
All this chaotic confusion,
Why do I feel so alone?

*A poem by Martha's House Client
Leon Warner*

- *Monetary contributions (an additional \$40,000 is needed for the first year);
- *Volunteering skilled labor, such as plumbing and electrical;
- *Donating new appliances;
- *Donating furniture;
- *Donating dishes, pots & pans, silver-

- ware, etc.;
 - *Donating shampoo, soap, toilet paper, toiletries, etc.
- For more information or to make a contribution, please call Jodi at 336-2597. Supplies can be donated on Tuesday and Thursday from 9 am - 12 noon.

BHA Continued from page 5

*The BHA administers the Section 8 Housing

Choice Voucher Program and currently has a contract to assist 1257 families. Unfortunately under the recent funding cuts, the BHA can only assist approximately 1150 families. The BHA subsidizes a family's rent through a Housing Assistance Payment made to a private landlord. There are rent limits, set by HUD.

- *Public Housing Capital Fund Program. Capital and management funding for public housing agencies. The Capital Fund is available by formula distribution for capital and management activities, including modernization of public housing sites, addressing deferred maintenance needs, replacement of obsolete utility systems, vacancy reduction etc. The BHA receives approximately \$500,000 each year.
- *Family Self Sufficiency Program. Section 8 Program participants have an opportunity to participate in this program. FSS allows a family to work one on

one with a counselor to become self sufficient and save in the process. An example would be, when a family starts on the Section 8 rent assistance program their rent contribution is perhaps \$50. each month. As their skills improve and their wages improve, their portion of the rent will go up as their income goes up. Should their portion of the rent increase to \$150.00 per month, while the participant would pay the increase, the BHA would escrow the difference between \$50 and \$150 or \$100 each month. When the family graduates from the program they may use this savings for their plan goals, such as starting a business, buying a home, etc.

- * Section 8 Homeownership Program. This program will assist a family with the purchase of a home. Income and program rules apply.
 - * Project Based Voucher Program. Under the project based program, subsidy is tied to the unit and not the family. The family who resides in a specific unit receives the rent subsidy.
- Programs funded by other sources:

- *HOME Program. The BHA receives funding through the City of Bloomington to assist additional families with rent.
 - *TBRA Program. To assist families who have lost their Section 8 vouchers due to medical circumstances.
 - *Cares Grant. \$1,300 for drug prevention and education.
 - *Jack Hopkins Grant. \$5,000
 - *Community Development Block Grant. Also through the City of Bloomington. The BHA has received funding for identified capital fund needs. This year the BHA utilized these funds for the installation of central air. This grant has been used in the past to fund hard wired smoke alarms, kitchen cabinets, security street lights and renovation of the Boys and Girls Club. A public housing authority's performance is measured by the Department of Housing and Urban Development utilizing several tools.
- The Section 8 Management Assessment Program (SEMAP) measures the success of the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. There are 15 indicators measured and the BHA's most recent SEMAP

score was 92, making the BHA's overall performance rating high performer. Three scholarships were provided for youth 11 to 14 to attend College for Kids at Ivy Tech. Sponsors for the College for Kids Camp are Monroe Bank, the Board of Commissioners of the BHA and The Executive Director of the BHA. The BHA staff will be providing the sack lunches and transportation if needed. Other activities include Camp Hidden Falls, The Waldron Arts Center, Wonderlab, Family game nights, Ice Cream Social, Cooking for Kids and National Night Out.

For information, contact us Monday thru Friday, closed Wednesday afternoons 8 to 4 at 1007 N. Summit Street. Phone 339.3491 Ext. 0. Applications are currently being taken for public housing on a walk in basis. Section 8 applications are not being taken at this time due to a waiting list of over 300 applicants. For questions concerning eligibility and applications call Angie at 339-3491 Ext. 114.

Middle Way Continued from page 5

With this constant growth and development,

Middle Way House has outgrown its emergency shelter and administrative offices at Kirkwood and Madison, its child care at The Rise, and seeks to bring its kitchens together in one location. In April Middle Way House, Inc. acquired the Coca Cola Bottling Co. plant, the historic building on South Washington-kitty corner from The Rise and across from Third Street Park. Over the next three years the brick building

will be renovated to include a large commercial kitchen and Community Kitchen Incubator, an expanded shelter, administrative offices, a larger Child Care Center and program areas. And Middle Way will continue to look for more employment opportunities for the women who are trying to rebuild their lives.

The Coca Cola Project

Middle Way House, Inc. purchased the Coca Cola Building at the end of April with funds from a private bequest, a loan to grant from the City of Bloomington and

the City of Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association. The actual footprint of the existing building is 18,650 sq.ft. It is projected MFW and the Community Kitchen Incubator will occupy ca. 5,000 sq.ft. in the historic building on the first floor. The south bay of the brick building will hold either child care or administrative programs; the second floor of the original building will house either a women's business center, a housing cooperative or shelter. The new construction which replace the metal buildings will most likely house administration and programs on the first

floor and shelter on the second. Funding will be sought in phases: \$900,000 for stabilizing the old building, the systems and bringing it up to code; \$1.2 million to develop the Kitchen and Child Care, and another \$1.6 million to construct the shelter and administrative and program spaces. The time frame is any where from 1 and ½ to 3 years.

Funding for the project will be a composite of private donations, government and private foundation grants, revenues (particularly from the businesses) and financing packages.

Stone Belt offers variety of living options

By Cheryl Paul, Publications Supervisor, Stone Belt

2815 E. 10th St.
Bloomington, IN 47408
812-332-2168, ext. 261

Stone Belt is a nonprofit organization that provides education and support for persons with disabilities, as well as working with families of young children with and without disabilities to foster maximum growth and development. We are the oldest and largest organization of our kind in South Central Indiana, providing residential, employment, manufacturing, life skills training, parent and child development and psychological services to help our clients actively participate in the community.

Since its inception in 1970, Stone Belt's residential program has offered clients choices. Initially the choice involved being integrated into the community through group home living, instead of living at home with parents/caregivers or in an institution. Today Stone Belt's Residential Living program, offers clients a variety of living options, increasing their inclusion and activity within the community.

Stone Belt's Residential Living program started as part of a pilot program in conjunction with the Indiana School for the Blind. Stone Belt began leasing apartments, from I.U.'s Development Training Center (DTC) in the summer of 1970. These apartments housed six blind and developmentally disabled school-aged children and their staff. Funding for the program came from a state grant, which was allocated among Stone Belt, the School for the Blind and the DTC. The

next year, two additional apartments, one for women and one for men, were leased from the DTC. Each apartment housed six residents. By 1974, the program expanded to include another apartment for children.

By 1985 the Residential Living program had expanded so much that Stone Belt opened its first residential home, Blackstone House, on January 18, providing supported group living to seven women. 11 more group homes opened over the next 12 years and residential living quickly grew to become the agency's largest program.

Today Stone Belt provides group living in 11 homes in Monroe and Lawrence counties serving 66 clients. Supported Group Living (SGL) provides clients with the opportunity to build long-term relationships and a sense of family. Staff members actively work with clients on skills necessary for daily living, including basic hygiene, cooking, shopping, money management and socialization. Each individual has his/her own room, enabling them to choose to spend time alone or with roommates.

Stone Belt added more choices to its Residential Living program in September 1997 by establishing the Supported Living Program (SLP). SLP offers adults and children of all ages a wide variety of options for maintaining a living arrangement of choice. Supports are based on individual wants and needs and include community living assistance, such as respite staff for families, 24-hour live-in or shifted staff, or less than 24-hour

supervision. Today the number of residents served in Supported Living is greater than the total population served in Stone Belt's 11 group homes. The program also serves clients across a six-county area.

According to Maureen Gahan, former Director of Residential Living and current Director of Stone Belt's Milestones program, the greatest change over the years in the residential living program is who makes the decisions regarding clients' choices. "Today the clients make the decisions regarding their residential life. In the past others made the choices for

them."

Certainly a major success of CLS has been the successful integration of persons with developmental disabilities into the community.

"As clients began to take their place within the community, the transformation was incredible. It was and is so rewarding to watch these individuals grow, change and become empowered," said Gahan.

To find out more about Stone Belt and its many programs contact Leslie Green at 332-2168, ext. 261 or email lgreen@stonebelt.org.

Simpson has benefitted



Terry Simpson has been at Stone Belt since it started in 1959 and even then, as a young boy, he had a dream to live independently.

Terry lived with his father until he was a teenager when he moved into Stone Belt's first residential setting, in the early 70s. From there he continued using Stone Belt residential services, moving into three different group homes.

In 1997 Stone Belt started its Supported Living Program (SLP). Terry was so excited, he signed up for this new service immediately. This meant he would finally be able to fulfill his dream of living on his own. SLP would provide him independence with just the right amount of support services he needed.

Unfortunately Terry's transition to independence took a long time. Terry did not receive appropriate funding from the State of Indiana until February 2003. In the

meantime he prepared to live on his own. He learned many new skills and gained a new level of confidence in his ability to live independently.

Today, Terry finally lives in his own apartment and receives support services from Stone Belt a few days a week.

Despite living a full and active life Terry has found that living on his own can be challenging. Recently he has had some significant medical problems. During this time he had to be responsible for getting proper medical attention and taking care of his own needs during his recovery. He also needed to learn how to live on a budget, because he was unable to work. It is times like this that Terry needs support from the community and extra support from Stone Belt.

Terry has led a life full of transitions to finally achieve his dream of being independent.

Shalom

Continued from page two

ment will be performed with each family followed by referral to appropriate agencies that provide the necessary services. Services may include emergency and ongoing food assistance, emergency rental assistance, health care, job training, childcare, legal services, and transportation.

Housing Location Component

This activity will utilize the Housing First approach, which is considered to be the best practice on a national level for working with families who are currently homeless. The model emphasize a rapid move to permanent housing combined with intensive case management to promote housing stability. The Housing Location Component with end homelessness for 50 families during the first year. Activities

*Linkage to Community Supports. A needs assess-

include:

*Housing Needs Assessment
*Housing Search. Principal partners for this activity will be the City of Bloomington's Department of Housing and Neighborhood Development (HAND).

*Home Visits. This will be done at 3 month intervals to ensure stability of housing arrangements

*Revolving Security Deposit Fund. Each homeless family will receive a \$100 grant to minimize a major barrier to securing housing.

In summary, the Family Homelessness Prevention Project will have a positive outcome for 150 homeless and near-homeless families in its first year. Most importantly, the project develops a systematic, accessible vehicle for the community to address this human tragedy. If you would like to know more about this program, please contact Joel Rekas, the Director of the Shalom Community Center at (812) 334-5728.

Rhino's offers healthy outlet for youth

By Brad Wilhelm, Director, Rhino's Youth Center

325 S. Walnut Street
333-3430
www.rhinosyouthcenter.org

Rhino's Youth Center, a division of the Harmony Education Center and a United Way Member Agency, is now in its thirteenth year of providing entertainment and engagement for the youth of our community in an alcohol, tobacco, and drug free environment.

Rhino's was founded in March of 1992 by Harmony School and the Monroe County Prosecutor's Office. Initially started as a one-night-a-week music club, it has become a full-fledged weeklong youth center.

Young people have feeling of ownership of Rhino's because they book it, they clean, and they promote, and even help fund raise for it.

Rhino's offers entertainment for youth on Saturday and Sunday evenings. As well as music and shows, Rhino's provides programs in partnership with the City of Bloomington Parks and Recreation Department through the week after school. Media classes and practical applications, art programs, classes, workshops, mentoring, tutoring, Internet access, community service, one on one informal counseling, service referral, and more are available.

Rhino's is also just a place to "hang out." Rhino's operates the WFHB Youth Radio program and has a production studio to train and develop youth media voices. Also included in the studio is digital video editing equipment that is used



David Woodruff, Louis Rogers, Addison Rogers, Nile Arena, and Andy Dimas (from left to right) working on filming a video at Rhino's.

Photo by Pam Kinnaman

for a Youth Video program that produces a monthly television show in collaboration with the Monroe County Public Library's Community Access Television (CATS).

The newest Rhino's program is the Youth Publication program which publishes a monthly newspaper featuring youth new, creative writing, poetry, photography, a youth calendar and more.

All four after school programs include an anti-tobacco and positive lifestyle

choice components as well. Youth in the after school programs work with Middle Way House and Big Brothers Big Sisters and Girls Inc, and Amethyst House, and many other community groups not only supplying them with media promotion or mentoring and training.

Rhino's Youth Center's approach to prevention programming is simple. Rhino's strives to give kids something fun and meaningful to do as an alternative to risky behavior. Rhino's goal is to promote

healthy lifestyle choices without imposing other restrictions. The staff and volunteer staff at Rhino's spend many hours talking with youth about substance abuse and referring youth to treatment and prevention services when needed.

Rhino's is currently renovating a new space next door to its current location on South Walnut. The new location will more than triple its physical capacity and allow for more innovative service to the youth of our community.

Reflections on volunteering at Shalom

By Pat Andrews

I began volunteering at Shalom in May of 2002. Following orientation, I started working in the kitchen. Mostly, I chopped vegetables, made salads, cut up cakes and pies, and occasionally stirred whatever might be simmering on the stove in an industrial size pot. At first, it all seemed a bit strange. I couldn't always tell if I was working with a guest or a volunteer. Sometimes, a guest seemed to be directing the action. Soon, I began to talk with my fellow volunteers and guests about their life experiences. As I de-boned chicken with "Pete," I learned that he had first come to Bloomington as a doctoral student in the IU Department of Physics in the mid-sixties. Following bouts of text anxiety and other academic problems, he dropped out, opened his own electronics shop for a time, and later struggled to stay afloat. At the time we talked, he was living in his car and hoping to find stable employment. Another guest/volunteer, "Mary," had escaped an abusive relationship and was staying at Martha's

House. She was anxious to get back on her feet and become self-supporting. Since she was currently eating at Shalom and the Community Kitchen, she expressed gratitude that she was able to work in the Shalom kitchen so that she could "give back." Amy didn't want "hand-outs," and she was determined to land a job.

In the summer of 2003, I moved from the kitchen to the Job Links program, where I remain today. Job Links is far more than a job searching/resume preparation program. It is a wonderful supportive network of caring volunteers who attempt to use their life experiences, life philosophies, knowledge, and skills to assist Shalom guests in diverse ways. We listen, offer encouragement, extend advice, assist with completing job applications, and refer guests to other experts who also volunteer at Shalom.

These are the things we give-but what we receive is even greater. Here are a few of the gifts I have been given:

*A huge hug from "Susan," who is

between jobs at the moment, but who knows that I have been away for a week and is just happy to see me again

*A warm, warm greeting and a big smile from "Jack" who has completely turned his life around and now is slowly completing an Associate's degree at Ivy Tech.

*Lovely wind chimes from "Mindy" (hanging merrily on my screened porch)-thanking me for helping her find a part-time job.

*A plastic robot from a cereal box, a gift from "Bill"-as thanks for our work together on his reading challenges. His robot sits proudly beside my home computer-next to a couple of family pictures.

*A speech of tribute from "Claire"-who tells me that I am special and expresses her gratitude for the work I do at Shalom.

*A hearty hug from "Bill" who has now held a job at Boston Scientific for more than six months and is happily married. He attributes his success (in this order) to God, Norm, and me!

In a recent sermon, Jimmy Moore,

one of the pastors at the First United Methodist Church, pointed out that we one of our basic human needs is to feel useful. I agree. During my time at Shalom, I have felt very useful-and I have also felt missed, appreciated, loved, and blessed.

It would be misleading to suggest that all Shalom stories have happy endings. Some guests struggle with mental illness, locating affordable, safe housing, or finding a job that pays a living wage. But it is the success stories that sustain us. You may wonder, for example, what has become of Pete and Mary. Mary now works as a cook in the church kitchen and continuously urges me to come out to more Wednesday night church suppers. Four months ago, Pete landed a janitorial job at one of the new apartment complexes downtown. We celebrated with a batch of chocolate chip cookies. As you can see, Shalom guests' victories truly become our own.

HHFB helps those who help others

By Tony McGovern, Volunteer Coordinator



615 N Fairview
812-334-8374
www.hhfoodbank.org

The Hoosier Hills Food Bank collects, stores, and distributes nutritious food products to over 85 non-profit organizations, which provide free feeding programs that serve both ill and needy families and individuals in Monroe, Martin, Owen, Orange, Brown, and Lawrence Counties in South Central Indiana. Since

opening in 1983, over 15 million pounds of food have been distributed and since 1995, the prepared food rescue program (Meal Share) has distributed over 300,000 healthy meals to members of the community. In 2004, the Hoosier Hills Food Bank distributed 1,753,000 pounds of food to member agencies. These food donations help to feed the estimated 20,000 individuals relying on the food bank for food each month.

The Hoosier Hills Food Bank is a mem-

ber agency of United Way Community Services of Monroe County and an affiliate of America's Second Harvest - The Nation's Food Bank Network. Food donations come from a variety of donors including local distributors, grocery stores, restaurants, schools, community members and America's Second Harvest. Many school, workplace and community food drives also help fill up the food bank throughout the year. Events, such as Soup Bowl, Taste of Bloomington, Homeward Bound, NALC Food Drive and Live From Bloomington benefit the food bank.

How can one person stop hunger in Indiana? One plate at a time! You can help drive away hunger across Indiana and still be home in time for dinner. When it comes time to renew your plates, simply come to the Hoosier Hills Food Bank to fill out the Food Bank Plate form. You will take this form to the License Branch to receive your Indiana Food Banks license plate or new tags. It is as quick and as easy as filling out a simple form and donating \$25 to the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. That donation of \$25 can provide 175 loaves of bread,

233 cans of soup, or 200 boxes of cereal to those who need it. If you have any questions, call us at 334-8374! The Plant-A-Row for the Hungry program is continues to grow this summer.

Local gardeners and farmers plant extra rows of fruits and vegetables to directly donate to those in need. You can make a difference by donating any extra produce you grow this year. Drop off sites include Worm's Way-7850 N. State Road 37-7 days a week 10 am-6 pm, Bloomington Adult Community Center-349 S. Walnut St.-Monday-Friday 8 am- 5 pm, Bloomington Community Farmers' Market in the HHFB truck at Showers Common-(corner of N. Morton St. and W. 8th St.)-7 am-12 noon, Saturdays from May-October, Hoosier Hills Food Bank-615 N. Fairview Ave.-Monday-Friday 9 am-5 pm. Volunteers play a crucial role in the Hoosier Hills Food Bank's daily operations and special events. Ongoing projects for groups, families and individuals are available. If you are interested in becoming involved with the food bank, please call 812-334-8374 or visit www.hhfoodbank.org.

FUMC Pantry offers groceries to the needy

By Rupert Wentworth

In August 1992, First United Methodist Church (FUMC) was asked to assist the Community Kitchen of Monroe County. That organization was in transition in relocating from its long-time home at MCUM to new facilities in a building on S. Rogers St., but due to remodeling delays, the Community Kitchen was unable to make a smooth transition from one site to another. FUMC was asked if the Community Kitchen could use the church's kitchen facilities and Fellowship Hall to feed the hungry of Monroe County for two or three months. After they moved to FUMC's facilities, over two hundred volunteers from FUMC helped out from late August 1992 to the end of October of 1992.

As the Community Kitchen moved on to its new facility, several FUMC people who had volunteered felt a call to continue in mission by feeding the hungry of Monroe County. This group organized a Wednesday sack lunch feeding program which would provide sandwiches, fruit, and other low-cost items from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. The guiding philosophy, of course, was, and still is, biblically based. Anyone could obtain food, no questions asked. Contributions and volunteers from the church were all that was needed to begin. The first lunches were distributed in December 1992.

When the Shalom Center was organized several years later, they decided to serve



FUMC volunteers offer time to help those less fortunate than them.

Photo by Pam Kinnaman

hot lunches, and we saw that preparing sack lunches was impractical. We changed our concept to that of a guided grocery. For about two years, we have operated what we call the FUMC Pantry on Wednesday afternoons from 3:30-5:30PM.

Anyone who wants a bag of groceries must come in person to our guided grocery store. Each person is offered canned vegetables, canned fruits (when available), a protein item, a sweet treat, chips or other such snack food, and bread, as well as

whatever else we can get from the food bank.

Although we use the same space in the church, we are not part of the Shalom Center. All of our money comes from the church.

BBBS: Where friendship happens

By Deborah Meader, Case Manager, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana

418 S. Walnut Street
334-2828
www.bigsindiana.org

A Little Help From Our Friends

Long before Ringo sang about it, Big Brothers Big Sisters of America not only knew that we all "get by with a little help from our friends", but was responding to it! At the local level, Big Brothers Big Sisters of South Central Indiana (BBBS) has brought caring adult volunteers ("Bigs") into the lives of children ("Littles") since 1973.

These matches are about sharing simple activities that develop into friendships. And these important friendships are what open a world of possibilities and opportunities for kids. Our Bigs experience the satisfaction of having a positive and lasting impact on a child's life while having fun along the way. Like all good friendships, every one benefits.

Mentoring Works

While we all know in our hearts that a relationship with a caring adult helps kids overcome the challenges they face, research also shows this to be the case. Little Brothers and Sisters are less likely to begin using illegal drugs, consume alcohol, skip school and classes, or engage in acts of violence. They have greater self-esteem, confidence in their schoolwork performance, and are able to get along better with their friends and families.

Who We Serve

BBBS serves children ages six through seventeen in Monroe and Owen Counties. Our mission is to empower community youth. Our vision is to bring a Big Brother or Big Sister to every child who needs and wants one.

In 2004, we served over 1,000 children. In our Community and Club Bigs pro-

grams, we matched 345 children; in our School Bigs program, 350 students were matched.

Getting Involved - Becoming a Big Brother or Sister

Becoming a Big Brother or Big Sister is an opportunity to make a new friend, to have fun, to see a child grow and learn new skills, and to make a positive difference in a child's life. Volunteers can learn more about specific mentoring programs by attending one of our Information Sessions or by calling 334-2828. Applications are available from our website (www.bigsindiana.org).

BBBS offers a variety of programs to fit any interest, lifestyle, or schedule. Our Community Bigs and Couples Match programs offer friendship, support, and fun for children and teens. Bigs and their Littles meet approximately 8 hours each month. Whether it's a trip to the park, a movie, or a game of cards, all of these

times become memory-making moments in a child's life. Our School Bigs and Club Bigs programs match volunteers with Littles at school (one hour a week, on school grounds only) and at the Boys & Girls Club (2-3 hours once a week at the Club's facility or exploring the surrounding neighborhood).

Other volunteer opportunities include Reading Coaches with the Indiana Reading Corps, First Friends events, and our programs for adolescents.

Getting a Big Brother or Big Sister

For children who need and want a Big Brother or Sister, applications are available by calling 334-2828 or on our website (www.bigsindiana.org). BBBS welcomes calls from parents, teachers, and individuals working with youth and families who are interested in our mentoring programs.

Client gives her perspective on a Big Sister's help

By Jennifer Young, Big Brothers Big Sisters client

Our family has had to cope with several tough issues over the years -domestic violence, divorce, addictions, and poverty. Yet with help and support from caring community agencies, we have managed to hold things together.

Margaret, my 12 year-old daughter got her Big Sister two years ago. We were easily able to sign her up at Templeton Elementary, and she has been thrilled to have been matched with the same "Big" continuously throughout the process.

Margaret has four brothers, so I know she enjoys being able to spend time with her Big Sister and have some additional feminine influence in her life.

One of the best things about the program is that she has a chance to have fun with a friend. She has the chance to get away from the chaos at home, even for a few hours, and visit a park, festival, the mall, whatever! It's about having an enjoyable, healthy outlet in her life.

Recently Margaret was able to attend a "girls only" weekend retreat, and again she had the opportunity to explore issues and bond with other girls.

I believe the program has given her more confidence and reassures her with the knowledge that no matter what challenges life brings, she does not have to



Margaret enjoys a horse ride at a recent BBBS outing.

Photo contributed

trudge through alone.

Our entire family was invited to celebrate at McCormick's Creek with all the other Big Brothers Big Sisters families

from our area last week. We had a great time eating, swimming, hiking, socializing and more with other folks like us. It was a trip we otherwise probably

couldn't afford, and we are grateful for that experience. Now my 2nd grader, Sam, wants to get a Big Brother himself!

Agency reference guide

For more extensive articles about these agencies, see the April 2005 issue of Safety-Net at www.shalomcommunitycenter.org. To learn more about the agencies, and how to volunteer, please access their websites. Several of the agencies described below provide multiple services.

Agency	Service
Amethyst House	Transitional housing, addiction counseling
Center for Behavioral Health (CBH)	Behavioral problems, Mental health treatment
Family Services Association/Mental Health Alliance (FSA/MHA)	Individual, family counseling, mental health treatment, CASA
Community Kitchen	Serves meals, Monday-Friday, 4 p.m.-6 p.m.
Martha's House	Emergency Housing
Middle Way House	Emergency housing for women who are victims of abuse or in danger
Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM)	Emergency services to assist families, subsidized child care
Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)	Opportunities for persons 55 and over to volunteer in the community
Salvation Army	Emergency shelter, transitional housing, food pantry, other services
Shalom Community Center	Serves breakfast and lunch, several on-site services, link to other agencies
Stepping Stones, Inc.	Transitional housing, supportive services for youths, aged 16 to 21
Youth Services Bureau	Youth Shelter, supportive services for youths 8 to 17

Amethyst House
P.O. Box 11
Bloomington, IN 47402
(812) 336-3570
www.amethysthouse.org

Amethyst House 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 in Evansville.

The Center for Behavioral Health (CBH)
645 S. Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN 47403-2367
(812)-339-1691
www.the-center.org

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

Family Service Association and the Mental Health Alliance (FSA/MHA)
120 7th Street | One City Centre
Bloomington, IN, 47403
(812) 339 - 1551
www.monroementalhealth.com

The goals of the FSA/MHA programs include promoting awareness, acceptance, and treatment in the prevention of mental illness, pro-

tecting children from abuse and neglect, and strengthening the quality of family life. The programs include Oak Tree Counseling (provides individual and family therapy), Ombudsman Program (assists people involved with mental health services with respect to arbitration and conflict resolution with those services), Jail Diversion (a support network for services to this sector of the community), support groups that provide education and advocacy for families and friends of persons coping with specific types of mental illnesses, Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA), who work with the Court to make recommendations for rehabilitative and protective services for children and families, and Families in Transition/Family Strengthening (provides parenting classes for both the community and for incarcerated parents).

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County
917 S. Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 332-0999
www.bloomington.in.us/~kitchen

The Community Kitchen of Monroe County serves free meals Monday through Saturday 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Sit-down meals are served at 917 S. Rogers Street, and carry-out meals are served at the Express location, 1100 W. 11th Street. The Community Kitchen also provides meals for after-school programs at the Boys and Girls Club, The Rise, and Girls Inc.

Martha's House
1010 S. Walnut Street
PO Box 2115
Bloomington, IN 47402-2115
(812) 336-2597

Martha's House is an emergency shelter with 28 beds for homeless men and women. Services provided include case management, food, and clothing. If you would like to make a donation or volunteer, call the executive

director at 336-2597.

Middle Way House
24 Hour Crisis Line: (812) 336-0846
www.bloomington.in.us/~mwhouse

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. If you are interested in volunteering or making a donation, call (812) 333-7404.

Monroe County United Ministries (MCUM)
827 W. 14th Street
Bloomington, IN 47404
(812) 339-3429
www.bloomington.in.us/~mcum

MCUM 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.

Monroe County Wrap-Around
645 S. Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN
(812) 337-2225

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 represen-

tative 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 drivers 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. This summer, the Lost Child Fund, which operates within Wrap-Around, is accepting funds to send children of working single parents to camp.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC)
1010 S. Walnut Street, Suite G
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 355-6843
www.bloomington.in.us/~mhc

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a food pantry that provides nutritious food to people in need. Most of the food is received from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. MHC also operates a Nutrition Education Program and an organic Community Gardening Program. If you would like to volunteer, call (812) 335-6843 or view the website.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC)
1010 S. Walnut Street, Suite G
Bloomington, IN 47401
(812) 355-6843
www.bloomington.in.us/~mhc

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a food pantry that provides nutritious food to people in need. Most of the food is received from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. MHC also operates a Nutrition Education Program and an organic Community Gardening Program. If you would like to volunteer, call (812) 335-6843 or view the website.

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Agencies

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Mother Hubbard's Cupboard (MHC)
1010 S. Walnut Street, Suite G
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(812) 355-6843
www.bloomington.in.us/~mhc

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard is a food pantry that provides nutritious food to people in need. Most of the food is received from the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. MHC also operates a Nutrition Education Program and an organic Community Gardening Program. If you would like to volunteer, call (812) 335-6843 or view the website.

Retired and Senior Volunteer Program (RSVP)
7500 W. Reeves Road
Bloomington, IN 47404
(812) 876-3383

The Retired and Senior Volunteer Program of Monroe and Owen counties provides opportunities for persons 55 and over to provide a variety of services to the community, including: tutoring children in reading, helping to build houses, participating in neighborhood watch programs, delivering meals to the homebound, offering disaster relief to victims of natural disasters, and helping community organizations to operate more efficiently. RSVP assists volunteers in finding projects that match their interests and abilities. If you would like to volunteer, call (812) 876-3381 or email the Director, Shalini Sarin: ssarin@rsvp@area10.bloomington.in.us

The Salvation Army
111 N. Rogers Street
Bloomington, IN

(812) 336-4310

The Salvation Army in Bloomington provides a variety of services, including: food pantry, food vouchers, emergency shelter, transitional housing, seasonal assistance, clothing, furniture, appliances, household items, hygiene items, rent/mortgage assistance, utility assistance, medical assistance, disaster relief, summer child care, after school programs, summer residential camps, adult programs, child care connection, nursing home visitation, gas vouchers, bus tickets, a place of worship, and a thrift store. All services are without charge with the exception of Child Care Connection, thrift store, and transitional housing. Volunteers serve on the Advisory Board, Women's Auxiliary, ringing bells for the red kettles, supervising youth programs, and helping at the thrift store.

The Shalom Community Center
219 E. Fourth Street
Bloomington, IN
(812) 334-5728
www.shalomcommunitycenter.org

The Shalom Community Center is a daytime resource center for those experiencing homelessness and poverty. It is located in the basement of the First United Methodist Church at 219 E. Fourth Street, and is open Monday through Friday between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.

Services include breakfast and lunch, mail boxes, telephones, laundry facilities, diapers and other baby supplies, job counseling, job placement, resume assistance, G.E.D. preparation, and computer training programs. There is a weekly food pantry (FUMC Pantry) every Wednesday afternoon. The Shalom Community Center is a bridge to other agencies that send representatives on a regular basis to meet with individuals who come to the Shalom Community Center for advice and help. If you wish to volunteer, consult the website or call (812)-334 5728 and ask to

speak with the Volunteer Coordinator.

Stepping Stones, Inc.
P.O. Box 1366
Bloomington, IN 47402
(812) 336- 7196

Stepping Stones, Inc. provides a transitional housing program and supportive services for young people aged 16 to 21 years old who are experiencing homelessness, in conjunction with Family Solutions and the Youth Services Bureau. For more information about making donations or volunteering, contact Sheri Benham, Executive Director at 336-7196 or shbenham@indiana.edu.

Youth Services Bureau of Monroe County
615 S. Adams Street
Bloomington, IN 47403
(812) 349-2506
www.youthservicesbureau.net

The Youth Services Bureau operates a Youth Shelter that provides short term residential care and crisis intervention for youths ages 8 to 17. Services are provided for runaways, homeless, and youth in crisis or abusive situations at home. Services also include 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. The Youth Network is a YSB prevention program in partnership with the Asset Building Coalition, that helps to create and support student coalition groups in each middle school and one collective student coalition at the high school level.

Calendar of upcoming events

Community Kitchen Picnic
August 21st - Picnic @ Bryan Park 5-6:30pm - benefits Community Kitchen. Food by Roland's Cajun Catering. Event followed by Concert in the Park - Code Blue from 6:30-8:00pm.

FSA/MHA Raffle
August 27, 2005. At the mall. A raffle to benefit the CASA program of FSA/MHA. The CASA Playhouse and other prizes will be raffled off. Volunteers who would like to help should contact Deborah Dunning at 339-1551 Ex. 25.

Mother Hubbard's Cupboard Community Gardening Program
Volunteers meet weekly through October to tend & harvest from our 3 organic gardens. A great way to learn about organic gardening and help provide high quality food to people in need in Bloomington.
Banneker Community Center Garden (located at W. 7th & Elm Street)
Tuesdays 9-11 a.m.
Hilltop Garden & Nature Center Garden (located at E. 10th Street & The Bypass)
Tuesdays 6-8 p.m.
Harmony School Garden (located at E. 2nd & Woodlawn)
Thursdays 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.
There are also other opportunities for garden involvement. Please email us at mhc@bloomington.in.us if you're interested!

Shalom Basketball Event
Bloomington Basketball Bash to benefit Shalom Community Center. The three-on-three basketball tournament will be held at Indiana University HYPER Gymnasium on September 25 from 10 A.M. - 5:30 P.M. For more information contact Pam Kinnaman at 334-5728.

Bloomington Volunteer Network gives an outlet

By Bet Savich, Program Coordinator and Lucy Schaich, Volunteer Network Program Assistant - Family Matters

401 N. Morton Street, Ste 260
Bloomington, IN 47402
Ph: 812-349-3430

Website: www.bloomington.in.gov
Email: volunteer@bloomington.in.gov

VOLUNTEER 411

Looking for a way to get involved in the community, but aren't sure where to turn for information? The answer may be closer than you think.

QUESTION: Does Bloomington have a volunteer center to assist me in locating volunteer opportunities?

ANSWER: Yes! The City of Bloomington Volunteer Network (CBVN), a program of City government located in Showers City Hall, is one of 500 volunteer centers throughout the United States. The Network, which has been in existence since 1980, works with over 140 not-for-profit (nfp) organizations and programs in Monroe County, assisting them with all phases of their volunteer programs from recruitment

through recognition. The Network is a convener for the community, a catalyst for social action, and a key local resource for volunteer involvement. We work with other government programs, non-profit agencies, businesses, the schools, Indiana University and Ivy Tech to mobilize the effective use of volunteers to resolve community problems and build on community assets. We also work with potential volunteers to ensure that their community service is both productive and rewarding. Without volunteers, Bloomington/Monroe County would not be the outstanding community it is today.

QUESTION: So how do I connect with the Network to learn more about volunteering in the community?

ANSWER: CBVN publicizes and informs the community about volunteer opportunities through the use of the Weekly Volunteer Update (a weekly media blitz including an e-newsletter, website, radio public service announcements, community

access television, and three local newspapers), the Community Organizations and Volunteer Opportunities Guide (a comprehensive listing of community needs which volunteers can fill), Teens Volunteer (focusing on opportunities suitable for teenagers), and the Mentoring and Tutoring Directory.

QUESTION: Are there opportunities for young people to get involved through volunteering?

ANSWER: Absolutely! In addition to the Teens Volunteer publication, the Network also encourages youth volunteerism by administering the Presidential Freedom Scholarship Program and the Presidents Volunteer Service Awards, hosting a special club (the "President's Club") for young people who live in the Crestmont public housing project who are in the process of earning these volunteer-hours based awards and, for the past two years, CBVN has organized a youth program called the Teen Action Project (TAP), a youth leadership through service program. Youth are also

encouraged to participate in community service days including National Youth Service Day, Martin Luther King Jr. Day, and National Family Volunteer Day.

QUESTION: What other resources does the CBVN provide?

ANSWER: The CBVN trains volunteer managers through an annual six part training series, and recognizes volunteers through the Herald-Times Heart and Hand Awards, an annual community-wide event. In addition, the Network solicits a material needs wish list from all local nonprofit organizations for the annual Community Wish List and utilizes it throughout the year to match community donations with needs.

Find out more about volunteering in Bloomington! Get your free copy of one of the publications listed above or subscribe to the Weekly Update email newsletter by contacting 349-3472, volunteer@bloomington.in.gov or log on to www.bloomington.in.gov/volunteer.