

Fall/Winter 2009

Shelter Connection

A publication of Shelter House Community Shelter & Transition Services

The Year in Review



A young but enthusiastic participant of the July 1st Groundbreaking for the new shelter. This much-awaited event included presentations by Christina Canganelli (Shelter House), Christine Sheetz (United Way), Regenia Bailey (Iowa City Mayor), Dottie Persson (Shelter House Board President) and an ecumenical land blessing by Reverend Mel Schlachter – not to mention the Dan's Dairy ice cream enjoyed by all.

With the passing of this year, Shelter House celebrates two significant milestones: the ground breaking for the new shelter and commitment of the funds necessary to build it! The foundation for the Southgate Avenue facility is complete and Shelter House is on schedule to open the new facility in October of 2010. This has been a long journey and with the leadership of the Board of Directors we look forward to opening a new chapter. In 2009, we welcomed Diana Gilbert, Annette Schaaban, Dr. E. Torage Shivapour, and Anne Vandenberg to the Shelter House Board. Long standing board members Betty Norbeck, Garry Klein, Ross DeValois, and Victor Janey retired.

Through the leadership of the Shelter House board, this organization has stayed the course through much controversy and in spite of great odds. The progress on the new facility has brought with it a cycle of change for Shelter House. Both the board and staff are looking forward to the challenges that this new year of transition presents with enthusiasm and resolve.

The Capital Campaign Committee met the goal of raising the funds necessary to build the Southgate Avenue facility. With their primary charge fulfilled the members looked forward to the next challenge—establishing an endowment fund to help address the increased operating expenses of the new facility. Committee Chair Connie Champion and committee members Jim Merchant, Dale and Kay Prediger, and Lynn Rowat stepped down. The remaining members (Mary Larew, Dottie Persson, Dr. E. Torage Shivapour, and Alan and Liz Swanson) elected Joyce Leff as Chair of the Endowment Campaign.

The Endowment Committee has recently grown to include Robyn Hepker, Michael Lensing, Jean Lloyd-Jones and Carrie Z. Norton. This committee has taken on the challenge of building the endowment for the operations of the new facility to \$4 million. On November 15th, Marc Moen and Bobby Jett hosted an event with The Giving Group to begin fundraising efforts for the endowment campaign.

I thank all of you who have given of yourselves through financial and in-kind contributions, and through your volunteer efforts. I believe that you each share equally in our challenges, and our successes—you have made a difference in the lives of many. You give us faith, you inspire hope, you bring us joy! You answer our prayers. On behalf of everyone at Shelter House—clients, volunteers, staff, and board members—I thank you.

Christina M. Canganelli, Executive Director

Upcoming Events*

February 27

Annual Shelter House Book Sale at Hope United Methodist Church

March 27/28

Raising the Roof for Shelter House
A Musical Extravaganza at the Johnson County Fairgrounds.
Produced by June Braverman and Friends

April 17

8th Annual Spring Gala at hotelVetro

***Check our website for details and updates:**

www.shelterhouseiowa.org

Shelter House Land Blessing on July 1, 2009

"We come to hallow this ground

To set it aside for a good intention, a holy purpose, the gift of hospitality of friend and alien alike so revered by our religious traditions.

Also present today are

Those who have been served by Shelter House as a stop along the way or as a step upward to a new life,

Those in the religious community, who first saw the need for a shelter and brought it into being,

Those who have served as staff and board members over the years who shared the vision too,

Those public servants who have worked alongside,

Those many who have given of their time and money to bring us to this day,

And those who shun or fear the stranger, the wayfarer, the destitute.

So we bring our intentions to hallow this ground for service."

Reverend Mel Schlachter



Mel Schlachter during the land blessing holding a container of soil from the current shelter. He spread the soil as he led the participants around the perimeter of the new site.

A Look Back at Community Events Benefiting Shelter House in 2009



- January 24** Mondo's reopening a fundraiser for the new facility
- February 15** Benefit Concert by Alan Fellows and Friends at Gloria Dei Lutheran Church
- February 28** Shelter House Annual Book Sale at Hope United Methodist Church
- April 17** Sacred Music Concert at First Christian Church
- April 18** Shelter House Annual Gala, hotelVetro
- June 3** Unitarian Universalist Congregation annual luncheon benefit
- June 20** Iowa City's Junior League Annual Solstice Stride Run/Walk
- June 28** Bluegrass concert at First Methodist Church in partnership with St. Mary's
- July 1** Groundbreaking ceremony, land blessing, and annual ice cream social
- July 3** Dawn's Hide and Bead Away coffee house
- July 19** United for Shelter – a special offering collected at member congregations of the Consultation of Religious Communities
- August 2** Shelter House received confirmation from the Iowa Finance Authority of the \$2.66 million grant for the new building construction
- September 26** Concert at First Christian Church cosponsored by Faith United Church of Christ
- November 15** Benefit hosted by Marc Moen, Bobby Jett, The Giving Group and sponsored by Fresh Food Concepts for the Endowment Campaign
- November 18** Mia Za's Café introduced the Community Help Card to raise funds for both the Crisis Center and Shelter House through December
- December 6** Deck the Paws event at Kirkwood to benefit Shelter House and Johnson County Animal Shelter and Adoption Center
- December 10** General contractor selected for construction of the new facility
- December 12** Kick-off of the Pay It *Forward* Program - shop for a cause with BAGOLITAS® www.bagolitas.com/shelterhouseiowa



The Final Season of Overflow is Underway!

The Overflow Program is in full swing. November 15th marked the beginning of the final season of what will have been a seven-year long commitment. Last year's season of Overflow provided emergency shelter for 209 persons (unduplicated) and 1,661 nights of shelter. This was a substantial increase over the previous year with a 28% increase in the number of people sheltered and a 45% increase in nights of shelter.

This year has brought several changes. Christine Mullen and Meg Kiekhaefer are both taking a much needed and well deserved break! This year's coordinator is CJ Cash who has taken the Overflow Program on as his primary responsibility for his year of service in VISTA. Many thanks to Judith Crosset, Sally Jablonski, and Penny Rembolt who continue to provide leadership and continuity in the oversight and implementation of the Program!

In years past, the location of Overflow changed from week to week as it was hosted by partnering faith communities. This year, with the exception of the first two weeks, the Overflow Program will be housed at St. Patrick's Parish Hall. What a

wonderful repurposing of the parish hall as the congregation of St. Patrick's celebrates their first winter in their new church! I'd like to extend our sincere thanks to the City of Iowa City for allowing us to utilize the facility for these final months. Partnering faith communities this year are: Congregational United Church of Christ, First Christian, First Mennonite, First Presbyterian, First United Methodist, St. Mark's United Methodist, St. Mary's, Trinity Episcopal, Vineyard Community, and Zion Lutheran.

On behalf of everyone at Shelter House, I extend our heartfelt thanks to all of the volunteers who continue to make every night of the Overflow Program happen! Through your efforts, hundreds of men and women have been provided a warm, safe place to sleep on a cold winter night. Please know that your continued and unwavering support has fortified and strengthened us during this very long journey to our new shelter.

For more information on volunteer opportunities with the Overflow Program, please contact CJ Cash at cj.vistajc@gmail.com or 541-1475.

New Shelter House Website Goes Live



On November 24, Shelter House went live with an updated website. Please take a look at it the next time you are on the Internet. Our URL remains the same: www.shelterhouseiowa.org

We thank Ann Roller of Linden Tree Webworks and Michael Schmitz of Knowledge Meridian for their creative and technical expertise; Alan Elgar for representing the Shelter House Board's perspective and Katherine Burford who worked with Shelter House staff members to add and update content. The new site allows us to update content easily and will enable us to show progress on the new facility throughout 2010.

The Volunteer Corner

In the past year, Shelter House Volunteers have contributed thousands of hours of service. Through your gifts of time and talent:

- **1,661 nights of Overflow Shelter** were provided by the Consultation of Religious Communities' congregations.
- **88 congregate meals** were provided by various student groups, churches, community agencies, families and friends.
- **Volunteers worked 958 hours** to keep the facility cleaned, maintained and repaired. They answered the phones, sorted donations, served dinner, did office work, and visited with and assisted our clients in everyday needs.
- Fundraising events raised over **\$105,000**.
- **On-site mental health counseling** was supported by the University of Iowa's Counseling Psychology Program.

Through your efforts, hundreds of men, women, & children have experienced the kindness, hospitality and generosity of this community! On behalf of everyone at Shelter House, the Board of Directors (19 volunteers strong), staff and clients, we are grateful! You have made a difference in our lives. You inspire and fortify us and we thank you!

For more information on volunteer opportunities at Shelter House please contact Megan DeMeulenaere at megan@shelterhouseiowa.org.

The STAR Success Stories

Shelter House creates opportunities for change and through this change we guide people back to their own housing and maintaining that housing. We not only provide a bed to sleep in, but help men, women and their families to get back on their feet, help keep children in school, men and women back to work, help the disabled and elderly to access benefits.

In general, people who come to us are working if not when they walk through our front door—soon thereafter. Their jobs, however, do not pay what housing costs—they have no health benefits or sick leave; they have no safety net. Many who come to us suffer from alcohol and drug addictions, mental illness or other chronic health conditions; without money, without insurance without a stable place to live—not even an address. All come to us with a past. Most want to put this past behind them.

The following stories illustrate the impact that Shelter House has on people's lives.

Coming Home

I first met Richard* at Christmas time about eleven years ago. He was begging the staff at the shelter to let him stay. We knew that he couldn't as he was heavily intoxicated. That night, all we could do was to send him in a cab to the hospital. I remember that moment as if it was yesterday.

I had seen this man on the streets of Iowa City as many throughout Iowa City would have and I continued to see him in the years that followed. He could barely walk—he would shuffle around the downtown area all day long—heavily intoxicated by mid-day. I often felt that I was bearing public witness to this man killing himself right in front of me. At the time of my initial encounter with Richard, Shelter House closed at 8:00 a.m. in the morning and opened back up at 5:00 p.m. We had limited staff and very limited ability to work with men and women to address the barriers that they faced in moving on with their lives and out of homelessness.

In July of 2005 and at the age of 45, Richard started working with the STAR Program. Living outdoors and sleeping under bridges for more than 10 years had taken its toll. He had suffered an injury in which he had crushed his hip, his cognitive abilities were severely compromised due to a long history of alcohol abuse; he struggled with developmental disabilities and an untreated serious mental illness.

By this time, Richard had an extensive history of both hospitalizations and arrests—which of course came at no small cost to the community. He was caught in a chronic cycle of living on the street, hospitalizations, and arrests. He was falling through the cracks—the system was not working. It was clear that he needed a permanent, structured set of services and supports.

In an initial attempt to determine Richard's ability to live independently, the STAR Program assisted him with securing an apartment. The level of care Richard required proved to be far beyond that which the STAR Program could alone provide and he was soon found later that winter wandering the streets.

It was clear that Richard's need for increased care was fundamental to his own safety. STAR staff worked with the Johnson County Courts to have him committed. This resulted in a Mental Health Committal which was upheld to the level of inpatient care. Without this intervention, this man would never have moved beyond the chronic cycle of the street, hospital, and jail.

Richard was initially relocated to the Mental Health Institute (MHI) in Independence, Iowa where he was diagnosed with schizophrenia as well as many other attendant disorders. He was later transferred to a county facility where he spent one year obtaining the services that he had so desperately needed. During this time, STAR worked with MHI staff to collect the appropriate documentation and records to then secure state funding that would provide for long term residential care for Richard. When Richard returned home to Iowa City, he was then able to enter a supported community living program in a group setting which has since provided him with the structure that he needs. He has had no further hospitalizations or arrests. He has been sober for more than three years and has been stably housed (beyond institutions) for more than two. He has finally come home.

**Name changed to protect privacy.*

Program Summary

To be Near Family

Clara* came to us just over a year ago. She was 52 years old at the time and a victim of domestic violence. She had been homeless for the last six years. Due to arthritis, high blood pressure, gallstones, a pinched nerve, uncontrolled diabetes, asthma, and liver and kidney problems—coupled with limited learned skills—she had not been able to maintain gainful employment since the mid-1990s.

STAR staff wrote letters to Iowa Senators on her behalf and assisted Clara with the application process for Social Security. She was initially denied; STAR began the appeal process with her immediately. Clara won her case and the courts determined that she was qualified to receive disability benefits.

Even with monthly income in place, finding a place for Clara to live proved to be another difficulty as an inaccuracy in her birth certificate made obtaining an Iowa ID impossible. STAR staff worked with Clara to correct the birth certificate using her elementary school records and her son's birth certificate to provide the required accurate information. She was then able to obtain a state ID and complete the necessary housing assistance applications.

Clara recently moved into her own apartment near her daughter and grandchildren. Speaking about the Shelter House STAR Program, Clara said, "You all helped me. I don't know how to put it into words, but without you, I couldn't have made it!"

**Name changed to protect privacy.*

Back in the Driver's Seat

Lewis*, a 50-year-old man, came to the STAR Program as a resident of Shelter House. His primary objective was to obtain his commercial driver's license (CDL) and return to trucking. In order to accomplish this, he needed to obtain employment and save money to pay off past fines. After which STAR would be able to assist Lewis with the fees to renew his license.

Lewis worked through the STAR Program for three months and was employed at the Emerson Point Senior Dining site. He moved out of the shelter and into his own apartment. With the money he saved he was able to pay off his fines and obtain his CDL. Lewis is currently driving for a cab company and hopes to drive a truck in the near future. He has applied to CR England. Lewis is ready to graduate from the Program with the tools necessary to pursue his career goals.

**Name changed to protect privacy.*

Emergency and Transitional Shelter: Shelter House provides both emergency and short-term transitional housing to men, women, and children, the disabled and elderly. All shelter residents are provided breakfast and a nightly meal, shower and laundry facilities, mailing address, phone and message service. Shelter hours run from 5:00 p.m. through 8:00 a.m. Monday through Friday and are extended to 11:00 a.m. on weekends. During winter months (November through March) the shelter remains open throughout the day. The facility remains open throughout the night directly assisting individuals in crisis.

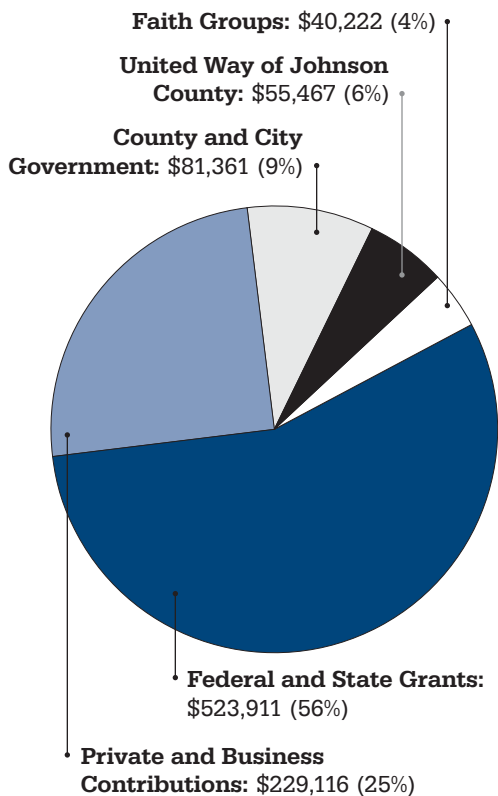
Interim Overflow Project: In collaboration with the Consultation of Religious Communities, Shelter House is able to provide overflow shelter services from November through March. Each night Shelter House personnel vet individuals seeking shelter, preparing a roster of those persons who are above the Shelter House capacity. The rostered people undergo background checks and breathalyzer tests before their admission to the overflow. Shortly after 9:00 p.m. volunteers transport the Overflow clients from Shelter House to the Overflow site. Prior to leaving for the Overflow site, individuals are provided full access to all drop-in center services of Shelter House. Volunteers provide breakfast and transportation for Overflow clients back to Shelter House the following morning.

Drop-In Center: From 5:00p.m. – 10:00p.m. daily, the agency operates Johnson County's only evening drop-in center. The Drop-In Center is open to all in need—former clients, homeless persons not currently staying in the shelter, and other low and very low-income citizens of Johnson County. Men, women, and children utilize the Shelter House Drop-In Center Program for laundry and shower facilities, clothing and toiletry donations, an evening meal, a mailing address, telephone use, messages, and most importantly access to Shelter House staff and outreach workers from STAR, the VA and the Community Mental Health Center.

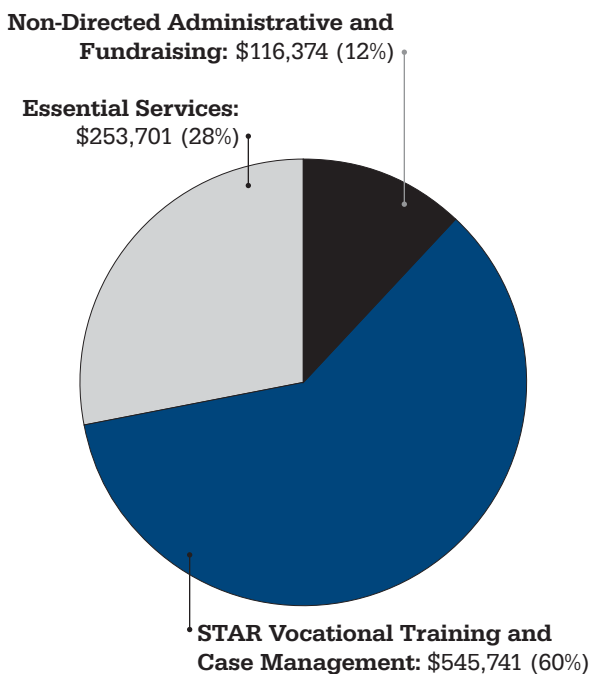
In-House Counseling: Anyone intending more than a transient stay is expected to participate in the In-House Counseling Program. Case managers are available and staff the house Monday through Friday 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Staff work with participants to design their own goals; clients then agree in writing to pursue them. Participants may stay for a maximum of 90 days in so much as they remain compliant with house policies and programmatic requirements. Staff work with clients to access community resources addressing needs as basic as a pair of glasses or work boots, to a social security card, bus passes, any mainstream public assistance for which the client may qualify, child care, medical and dental care. Clients are expected to address substance abuse and mental health issues where relevant. Staff work with clients and assist with finding and/or maintaining gainful employment and with housing searches and placements. Staff further work with clients to address budgeting, money management, and life skills. Clients are expected to save up to 75% of their earnings while staying at the shelter to be utilized towards the costs of setting up their own households.

By the Numbers: July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

2008 Audited Income: \$930,077



2008 Audited Expenses: \$915,816



Emergency and Short-Term Transitional Shelter

456 men, women, and children received shelter services (unduplicated).

10,973 nights of shelter were provided.

15% of shelter residents were military veterans

50% of shelter residents were women and children

Interim Overflow Program

209 men, women, and children received overflow shelter services (unduplicated).

1,661 nights of overflow shelter provided.

Drop-In Center Services

480 individuals in addition to shelter residential clients accessed the Drop-In Center throughout the year. They were offered an evening meal, access to shower and laundry facilities, a mailing address, phone and messaging service.

Over 14,500 evening meals were served during the Evening Drop-In Center, which operates from 5 – 10pm daily.

In-House Counseling Services

350 adults participated and of these

- 43% of clients moved to more permanent housing
- 85% exited with some source of income
- 46% exited with employment income
- 40% were disabled

STAR Case Management Services

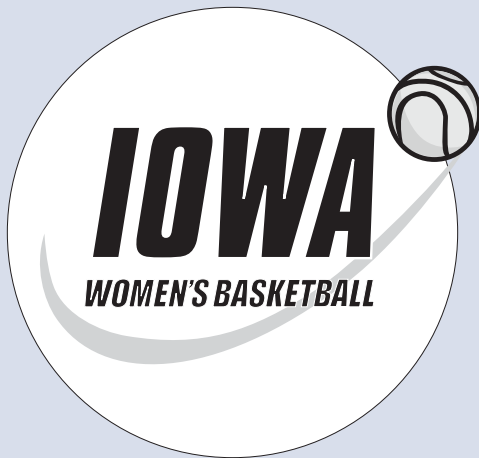
164 adults participated and of these

- 78% of clients moved to more permanent housing
- 89% exited with some source of income
- 48% exited with employment income
- 57% were disabled

Notice to Our Donors

Shelter House plans to publish its first Annual Report in late 2010. In preparation for that publication, please let us know if you wish to remain anonymous in our list of donors by contacting Genia by phone (319-338-5416 ext.101) or email: genia@shelterhouseiowa.org.

Special Recognition



Iowa Women's Basketball Team and Shelter House

For several years, the Iowa Women's Basketball Team has invited the children affiliated with Shelter House to watch a practice and play with them on the court, and then share a meal. On February 6, 2010, the children, athletes, and coaches will get together again, and excitement is mounting at Shelter House. The children are looking forward to their trip to Carver-Hawkeye Arena.

The Iowa Women's Basketball Team and their coaches are well-known for their volunteerism and community building efforts. On June 19, 2009, the team received the Governor's Volunteer Award for outstanding service to the State of Iowa for their contribution to the flood recovery effort. The families of Head Coach Lisa Bluder and Associate Head Coach Jan Jensen have generously supported Shelter House, and Jan Jensen has served on the Shelter House Board. These are only two examples of their commitment to community and those who have fallen on hard times. Don't be surprised to see the team and their coaches out serving their neighbors. Service is a value and a leadership expectation for this team.

We thank the Iowa Women's Basketball Team for their contributions to Shelter House and other nonprofits and organizations in the community. Go Hawks!

Board Member Recognition

by Dottie Persson, President, Shelter House Board

2009–2010 Board of Directors

Jean Berge
Denice Connell
Alan Elgar
Sarah Fletcher
Pat Furchtenicht
Diana Gilbert
Sarah Hunold
Becky Johnson
Gale Kolbet
Mary McMurray
Gay Mikelson
Jeff Nock
Dottie Persson
Mel Schlachter
Annette Shaaban
E. Torage Shivapour
Anne Vandenberg
Tom Werderitsch
Frederick Woodard

On behalf of the Shelter House Board, I wish to recognize Betty Norbeck, Garry Klein, Ross DeValois, and Victor Janey who retired this past year. They brought their talents to the leadership team during difficult times for Shelter House.

Betty Norbeck was the long-time secretary of the board. She kept the records of the board well-organized, and as a retired research scientist, she understood grants and asked vital questions about grant applications and ongoing activities funded by grants.

Garry Klein was a wonderful public relations face for Shelter House. He served on the Community Relations Committee where newsletters, press releases, and web pages were developed. Always a friendly person, Garry received numerous calls from community members about Shelter House, and he had the facts and figures at his fingertips to answer their questions.

Ross DeValois served as co-treasurer. Through his work, Shelter House meticulously monitored its monthly income, and the board stepped up its fundraising efforts based on his projections of financial need. Along with the executive director and the president of the board, Ross participated in the education of local, state, and national elected officials about homelessness in Johnson County and the necessary services and resources to help the most vulnerable in our community.

Victor Janey was an effective fundraiser for Shelter House, and he also served on the Community Relations Committee. Victor could always find sponsors and contributors for the annual gala.

During the tenure of these retiring board members, Shelter House planned a new facility, won law suits related to the new facility, broke ground for the new facility, and increased awareness of Shelter House services and funding for the organization. They served the community and Shelter House well. I am grateful for the opportunity to serve with them, and I appreciate their legacy.



NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
IOWA CITY, IA
PERMIT #24

P.O. Box 3146
Iowa City, IA 52244-3146



Shelter House is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) organization. As a partner agency of the United Way of Johnson County, we have successfully met all local membership accountability standards in finance, ethics, governance, and diversity.



YES! I want to support Shelter House Community Shelter & Transition Services

Each night men, women, and children who are homeless come to Shelter House in need, uncertain of their future, afraid, confused, and without hope. At Shelter House, they find a safe, caring place for the night as well as support and hope for a brighter tomorrow. Please give today and help with extraordinary change in our community.

- \$140** will sponsor a week of shelter and supportive services for someone trying to start their life
- \$100** will sponsor the shelter's women and children's room
- \$60** will sponsor a night of shelter and supportive services for a family in need
- \$20** will sponsor a night of shelter and supportive services for a person who is homeless in our community.

Name _____ Amount enclosed _____
Please print your name(s) as you wish to be acknowledged. Check here if you wish to remain anonymous.

Address _____ Phone _____

Please make checks payable to Shelter House and send to P.O. Box 3146, Iowa City, IA 52244
For gifts made by credit card Visa Mastercard American Express

Card number _____ Name as it appears on card _____

Expiration date _____ Zip code _____

For more information or to donate online please visit our website at www.shelterhouseiowa.org.