

Plymouth Taskforce for the Homeless
President's Report
2011

Overnights of Hospitality Program

We ended our seventh season of providing emergency sheltering in April, 2011. Over the 2010-11 season, we provided a total of 1,952 beds for 64 different individuals (the highest number in seven years), averaging 12.6 guests per night (also the highest average). One night, we had as many as twenty-two guests. There were over 150 volunteers from thirty different congregations and from the community at large who served as hosts and meal providers.

Beginning our eighth season, we lost St. Mary's so we were back to having six participating congregations as host sites for the Overnights program for the 2011-12 season. The six congregations are Christ Church Parish, Zion Lutheran, First Parish Unitarian, Church of the Pilgrimage, First Baptist, and Congregation Beth Jacob.

On Christmas Eve (2011), the Taskforce put up seventeen men at the Radisson. During the season, in emergency situations, we also put up a growing number of homeless women, each for a night in a hotel.

Our weekly shower program continues to happen once a week under the supervision of John Malloy.

Next Step House

This past summer we were able to complete the purchase of the Next Step House, Under the supervision of Board Member / Project manager, Judy Erikson, renovations to the kitchen and painting of all the rooms on the 370 side were begun. We were able to gain the services of the Special Project Team for Habitat for Humanity, thus saving us many dollars in labor costs. Once these renovations are complete, an open house will be held to which all will be invited.

The Taskforce interviewed fifteen individuals from the Overnights program to select two to move into 370. Two more were selected in consultation with Peggy Hall, case manager of Fr. Bills, for the other two slots. Phil Robertson was hired to be the House Manager.

Of note, the ten units in the Next Step House are certified as affordable housing units by the Department of Housing and Community Development which is of benefit to the town as these count toward the ten percent affordable housing stock under Chapter 40B.

New Housing Initiative

The Plymouth Taskforce continues to search for property suitable for purchase to provide additional housing. We are fortunate that the Community Preservation Committee is willing to support our efforts with CPA funding. The Taskforce has identified two such properties.

Government Housing Support

Three more men were placed in supported housing in 2011 through federal and state funds, administered through Fr. Bill's/Mainspring. Two more were placed in the Next Step house supported by the Taskforce. A total of thirty-one individuals have been placed since 2005. The Taskforce works with Fr. Bills/Mainspring to identify suitable candidates from the Overnights for housing. Since the Overnights program began, others have been able to secure their own housing

Unfortunately, more subsidies are becoming difficult to obtain due to funding limitations.

Point in Time Homeless Count

During the annual homeless count on January 25th 2011, we were able to identify thirty-five individuals – seventeen were in the shelter, thirteen were known to be on the streets or staying elsewhere for that night, and five were in doubled up situations. This was eleven more than last year's count produced. Of the thirteen on the streets, six were coupled up in tents. We continue to enter our data into the HMIS system as needed.

Grants/Fundraising

Our sixth annual golf tournament raised over \$18,000. Special thanks to John Malloy and Barbara Wojtklewicz for their hard work in organizing this event.

Through the Scrip Gift Card program, folks are offered the opportunity to buy gift cards from hundreds of companies. PTH earns a varying percentage of the sales. We hope that this program will continue to grow. Thanks to Rich Pecorella for chairing this effort.

PTH continues to garner donations from individuals and organizations. We received additional funding from the Church of the Pilgrimage's, Mahlon Walker fund in 2011 for supplies for the Overnights program.

Volunteer Appreciation Breakfast

Our annual volunteer breakfast was held in April. Thanks to Jack Ryan for organizing this event.

Goals for 2012

- Continue to investigate more properties for purchase
- Grow the Board of Directors
- Work with congregations toward hardwiring smoke/carbon monoxide detectors
- Seek and apply for additional grants
- Seek new fundraising avenues
- Increase membership and/or to do a general fundraising campaign
- Recruit more congregations to offer their space
- Develop a website
- Refine the organization of the Board

In closing, I would like to personally thank all of our board members – Jan Palmer-Tarbox for taking the minutes, Ted Gwilliam, Bob Hughes, Rich Pecorella, Jack Ryan, Pamela Daikh, Valerie Peck, and Barbara Wojtklewicz for their valuable insight and willingness to help with fundraising.

Thanks to Judy Erikson, Rich Pecorella, Bill Corners, Chirs DeGowin, and Barbara Wojtklewicz for driving. A special thanks to Geroage Berardi who helps to transport gear every week. Thanks to John malloy for supervising weekly showers. Also, I would like to thank all of the site coordinators – Barbara Wojtklewicz, Ellen Nordquist, Valerie Peck, Mindy Lee, Joyce Ashley, Rosalee Sinn, Ray Tompkins, Lawrence Silverman, Dick Skinner, and Jim Wohlander. Finally, the success of the Overnight program was due to the many, many other people who volunteered their time to host or to prepare a meal.

It is with deep regret but with grateful hearts that we say good bye to Judy Erikson and John Malloy, both of whom are stepping off the board after many years of dedicated service to our organization and to the homeless whom we serve. Both will be very hard to replace.

Respectfully submitted,

Constance Melahoures
President