



THE ICHIN' POST

Newsletter of The Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless

November 2010

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The Heart of HEARTH — by Charlie Bowker, ICH Board Member

As most of us realize, federal legislation is a complicated and messy process. That's why people call it "making sausage." One link in the sausage that is of particular interest to those who advocate for and assist homeless families and individuals was originally enacted as the McKinney-Vento Act signed into law on July 22, 1987. This Homeless Assistance Act was the first and only federal response to homelessness. Then in 1995, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) established the Continuum of Care (COC) planning processes to help communities ensure the most appropriate distribution of grant funds for homeless assistance.

Over the years there have been periodic reauthorizations of M-Vento and HUD's COC with changes in the direction and description of what and who constitute the government's definition of Homelessness with inevitable criticism and debate from many fronts.

To try to remedy some of the sticking points a new act was proposed.

So in May of 2009, President Obama signed into law a new reauthorization of HUD's McKinney-

Vento with a provision known as the "Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing" Act = HEARTH Act which is scheduled to go into effect by December of 2010.

In a nutshell, the HEARTH Act will incorporate the following provisions:

- Bring HUD's definition of Homelessness closer to that of the Department of Education (DOE) which encompasses all people who have no home, not just those who are living in shelters or on the street.
- Preserve funding for Supportive Services rather than diverting these funds to other unrelated programs.
- Encourage Community priorities to drive the funding, not Nationally prescribed incentives.
- Give Service Providers greater flexibility to meet match requirements instead of HUD's current 25% cash match.

Of course these changes also may entail changes in the funding picture for some local agencies which may mean cuts in some programs and major changes in the structure of others.

5th annual Empty Bowls— A Huge Success! Over \$5,000 Raised



'Tis the Season—Again !

by Don Blascak, Seasonal Emergency Shelter & Services Coordinator

It seems it was just a few days ago when we congratulated and thanked our participating congregations and churches for the great winter season of 2009/2010. We have been through a successful season of Summer Sun respite for our homeless brothers and sisters and provided water, sun screen, hats and other items to make the impact of Tucson's heat a bit more tolerable. Much of this was made possible by collection points established at places of worship in and beyond Tucson. In all we set a record of sorts and distributed 485 cases of water, numerous hats and even new underwear and socks.

Before the temperatures begin to dip, our work continues by scheduling 30 extra beds each night for the 93 day winter shelter season beginning November 28th. As the large shelters in Tucson fill up, we are able to provide gracious hospitality at

one of more than 30 congregations that open up their doors to those in need.

We have distributed 4,500 blankets to congregations, churches and social service agencies and have delivered 89 new cots to those facilities that have requested item. As of this writing we have recruited 3,883 beds with only 485 beds open for scheduling. Fifty-nine nights are fully subscribed with 30 beds and only 34 nights with some beds still needed. There are no nights without some beds scheduled which is a first in the several years I have worked with the Project Hospitality and One Step Beyond programs. If your congregation can help out, please let me know.

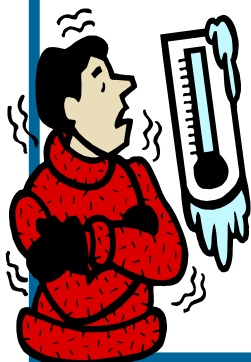
We are actively collaborating with the social service agencies and the Veterans Administration to assure case workers are available to visit guests and offer them encouragement.

So far, we have 26 congregations participating this year. We welcome back old friends and especially thank the congregations new to the program. There are blessings in store for you and your volunteers.

On-site Training Available for Project Hospitality & One Step Beyond

Although we always host an annual orientation and training session in November each year, we would be happy to come to your location at any time. Any size group is fine. Please contact our coordinator Don Blascak at (520) 275-5414 or dblasca@comcast.net or call our office at (520) 745-9443 or info@ichtucson.org

Our winter shelter policies and procedures manual is available on our website www.ichtucson.org/Resources.htm



Winter Shelter Clinic Update

Each year, ICH volunteers staff a medical clinic at the Salvation Army Hospitality House for Project Hospitality, One Step Beyond, Operation Deep Freeze and in-house Salvation Army guests. The team consisting of volunteer medical personnel and lay volunteers. The clinic is open every Monday, Wednesday and Saturday from 3:30-5:30 pm from Thanksgiving to the end of February. The team provides first aid, triage, influenza shots, and referrals for further medical, dental, substance abuse and psychiatric treatment as needed. Dr. Jay Goldman will be our clinic director and can be reached at (520) 975-8466. More volunteers are welcome, please call our office at (520) 745-9443 or Dr. Jay if you are interested in helping out.

Educate-Collaborate-Coordinate

by Lori Block, Executive Director

Certainly one of my favorite parts of this job is working with fun, compassionate and dedicated people in planning and executing events like Tucson Homeless Connect or sharing information and ideas with groups.

The benefits to client guests, volunteers and social service providers at events like Tucson Homeless Connect far outweigh the time and energy expended and associated with the conducting it. The guests receive direct services in a “one stop” setting and volunteers of all ages come face to face with the reality that our brothers and sisters experience daily. This alone is a valuable outcome of the event—the awareness of what is going on in our community and in our nation.

Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless has been working in our community for 24 years. We have done many things and are known for finding and filling in the gaps. I was recently asked “so what is ICH up to lately?” Three words popped in my head: *Educate, Collaborate, Coordinate*. Simply put that is what we do and that is our main focus. Coming along side of organizations and congregations in our community, working together to make a difference in the life of anyone seeking our assistance—with a little help from our friends (that’s you guys). We educate - thru trainings and orientations, classes, our newsletter and website, and we continue to seek out opportunities to teach ourselves about the plight of our neighbors.

We collaborate — as I like to say “we are at every table we can get a seat at.” Not just because many times there are cookies and other delightful goodies available, but because we are hungry for opportunities to help out and bring our volunteer friends with us to share in the experience.

We coordinate — resources of all kinds. From hundreds of blankets and cases of water, our supporters have continued to faithfully help us meet the needs. I have had the honor and the privilege to serve as volunteer coordinator for the last 5 Tucson Homeless Connect events. And let me assure you that it is not the event that inspires me the most, it is the journey — the recruiting, the phone calls, email messages and casual conversations with the cashier at Costco who becomes a volunteer at the next event.

There are 2 such events coming up in early 2011. The Annual Street Count of Homeless Persons will happen towards the end of January and the next Tucson Homeless Connect will be in the spring.

Please consider joining us. Or if you just have a question about things—let me know. I would love to hear from you.

Peace be with you all my friends and my future friends in this blessed season and in the New Year.

Tucson Homeless Connect Summary July 2010

Adults registered – 292

Bus passes given out – 283

Comfort kids (toiletries) given out – 315

AZ Driver’s license or AZ ID card obtained – 61

Medical screenings – 70+

Dental screenings – 25

Pet care and/or license given - 21

Members of the St Pius X youth group help out at Tucson Homeless Connect.



A Curse or A Blessing

by Eric Cross, President ICH Board of Directors

From my position as a case manager in a behavioral health services agency housing department, I work with a number of people that are experiencing some form of homelessness. Homelessness comes in many forms. Sleeping outside or "camping," staying at a shelter, staying with family or friends or "couch surfing." In most cases, the individuals are unemployed and have no income. There are however a number of people that have Social Security Disability Income (SSDI). With many of them, the award was determined from their mental health disability manifesting itself in differing events, hospitalizations and behaviors requiring interventions over a period of time leading up to their application for the SSDI benefits.

I have recently seen a new pattern of the Social Security Administration (SSA) decreasing individuals monthly benefit payment if the recipient doesn't have a physical documented address of their own, or have documentation of paying rent. The SSA uses a formula to determine

the portion of the award that is allotted for rent.

To an onlooker, this can be seen as either a "curse" or a "blessing" depending upon ones experiences and awareness. Obviously it might be seen as a "curse" if a homeless person's income is reduced. Like a slap in the face adding insult to injury. In my experience there usually is a behavioral reason that has culminated in their being homeless, particularly when they do have an income. The decrease of their award could potentially be an additional element of cognitive dissonance that brings about recovery (changing thinking). It could motivate them to address their disability, engaging in available services and reinforce accountability in their lives. This could be the "blessing."

With challenges come opportunities. In these times of governmental deficits, the government is expecting more accountability. It can also be done starting with the individual.

Want to help those in need?

Name: _____ Phone/Email: _____

Address: _____

- I would like to volunteer. Please contact me.
- I would like to have someone from ICH come and talk to our congregation or group etc.
- I would like to make a gift of \$ _____ to support the Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless.
- Please make a one-time charge to my credit card for \$ _____ (also available on our website ichtucson.org)

Card Number _____ Exp. Date _____

Signature _____

This gift is in: Honor of ~ Memory of (please circle one) _____

Please send acknowledgement to: _____

Address: _____

Thank you for your support. Please mail to: ICH, P. O. Box 16023, Tucson AZ 85732

~ THANK YOU ~ for your continued support of ICH

Below are contributions received between October 1, 2009 —October 31, 2010:

Congregations

Catalina United Methodist
First United Methodist
Grace Community Church
Immanuel Presbyterian
Our Saviour's Lutheran
St. Andrew's Presbyterian
St. Mark's Presbyterian
St. Pius X Parish
Unitartian Universarist

Charles & Peggy Bowker
Ted & Dorothy Briggs
Doug & Lynn Bultman
Jerry & Ruth Bultman
Bruce & Melinda Burke
Osmund Burton Jr.
Leslie Carlson
Carondelet Health Care
City ECAP

Susan Ann Goodman
Richard Gray
Audrey Harding
James & Bobbi Hargleroad
Patricia M Harris
Greg & Susan Hess
Max & Mari Helen High
John Hudson
Karen Kilmer
Gregory Kuykendell, P.C.

Pima County ECAP
Presbytery de Cristo
Jim & Jill Rich
Charles & Gwyn Roske
Lee & Edwina Scott
Barry Shearer
Susan Shetter
Margaret Shimota
Marilyn Simmons
Steven Slaff

Individuals/Groups

Albertsons
Laura Almquist
Charles Ambrose
Charles & Jean Ares
Mary Baenziger
Jodie Barnes
K Kent Batty
Raymond & Susan Bernal
Bialis Family Foundation
Robert Binnie
Betty Bitgood
Don Blascak &
Bonnie Demorotski
Mike & Lori Block
Kenneth Bosma

William Creamer
Eric & Sherry Cross
James Darling
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Scott Gibson
Jay Goldman, M.D.

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Robert & Patricia Turnbull
United Way of Southern AZ
Georgette Valle
Maria Van Oost
Howard Ward
Norman Weber
Lisa Weseman
Fran Westra
Alice Wilder
Susan Willis
George & Pat Yuhas

Income Tax Credit

Did you know that the Interfaith Coalition for the Homeless is one of the eligible State of Arizona certified charities for the working poor?

A donation made to ICH in 2010 can be used as a charitable contribution on your 2010 Federal itemized return, as well as a 2010 Tax Credit for Contributions to Charities that Provide Assistance to the Working Poor (Arizona Form 321) on your Arizona return. As a tax credit, every dollar that you donate under this program (up to \$200 for individuals, and \$400 for married filing jointly) is a dollar for dollar reduction of your Arizona State tax owed. Please check the 2010 Tax Credit guidelines at the Arizona Department of Revenue website at revenue.state.az.us for more information.



Donations may be made directly to ICH through United Way and:

- ✓ Pima ECAP—91880PC
- ✓ City ECAP—91880TE
- ✓ Basha's—Group ID #27571
- ✓ Albertson's Community Card—
contact our office.



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We are so grateful for your
prayers and support over the years

Happy Holidays to you
and your family



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