

Have You Seen Me?

As part of the More Than Homeless Project's efforts to help our community see beyond the stereotypes and recognize the humanity of people without homes, we've been spreading posters throughout the City to help spread awareness.

Look for posters like these around Bloomington. See if you can spot all nine.

I AM MORE THAN
HOMELESS

"I get all my clothes at Shalom, but they still say 'You're dressed too good to be homeless.'"

-Amber, Age 35

Church:
Trinity Episcopal
Hobbies:
Crochet, bead work
A Book I Love:
The Hobbit



@morethanhomelessproject
The More Than Homeless Project
Email spea@shalomcommunitycenter.org
for more info

Brought to you by Shalom Community Center

A Story of Success (cont. from pg. 1)

Bloom magazine. When not studying to become a parole officer, Missie is listening to country music and planning for her wedding in May.

When asked what advice she has for people experiencing homelessness, Missie simply states, "Don't give up, it does get better. It takes a while but it does get better."

Written by Alexzandra Smith, SPEA Intern



On the Front Lines of Hunger and Homelessness

DIGNITY

The Newsletter of Shalom Community Center

February 2016

A Story of Success—Missie Sexton

Today, you would be surprised to hear about Missie's turbulent past. Confident and well-spoken, she tells her tragic story with a startling openness.

"Before I came to Shalom I was real close with my family and pretty much just had a normal life. Then I got addicted to drugs and lost everything."

Missie was homeless on and off for five years, sleeping nights at the Interfaith Winter Shelter and Genesis Summer Shelter. But she dug herself out of homelessness by using the services at Shalom.

"I've been clean for four years. I got my GED through Shalom. I took classes here and then went to Ivy Tech. I decided to major in criminal justice because I know a lot of people who are in trouble with the law. A lot of people I've met here just need help."

"If Shalom wasn't here I probably would have been in a mental hospital somewhere or a lot worse than what I was. I could have died or just been much worse on drugs. But I became sober and decided it wasn't the life for me."



Missie is also a budding artist and had her photography featured in the December issue of

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Shalom—For All Who Seek Home

Our Mission

The Shalom Community Center is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to aiding and empowering people experiencing homelessness and poverty. As a comprehensive resource center for people who are living in poverty and experiencing its ultimate expressions, Shalom provides daytime and overnight shelter, hunger relief, life essentials, case management, street outreach, housing support, including rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing, employment assistance, and community access for many government and social service agencies.

Our Vision

Shalom Community Center envisions a community that honors every person's fundamental right to sustenance, a safe home, quality health care, and meaningful work. We see ourselves as a key leader in providing the full range of support and services for people dealing with poverty and homelessness in South Central Indiana.

How You Can Help:

Give: To support us financially, you can give online by credit card at www.shalomcommunitycenter.org or you can mail a check to:

Shalom Community Center
P.O. Box 451, Bloomington, IN 47402-0451

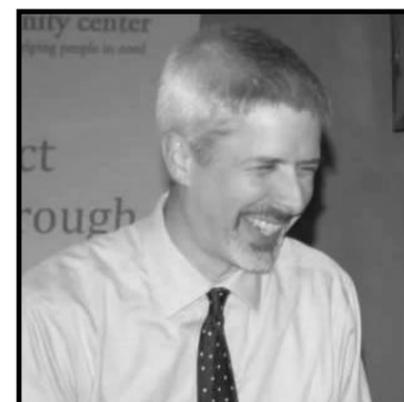
Volunteer: To offer your time and talent, contact Mark Emerson, Volunteer Coordinator, at mark@shalomcommunitycenter.org.

Donate: To donate items of need, see our wish list at www.shalomcommunitycenter.org.

Questions?: Contact us at (812) 334-5734 or shalom@shalomcommunitycenter.org.



Who's Staying at a Friend's Place?



Rev. Forrest Gilmore
Executive Director

Martha's House, Inc. was in trouble. After years of struggle with finances and management, they were no longer able to operate the only year-round, nonreligious, overnight emergency shelter for adults in 7 counties.

While the nonprofit that ran the shelter folded, the community rallied to save this essential community service for people in need.

Bloomington & Perry Townships, the Bloomington City Council and Mayor's Office, the Monroe County Council & Commissioners, the Community Foundation, New Hope Family Shelter, Shalom, and others jumped in with advice and financial support.

In December, the Bloomington Urban Enterprise Association made an unprecedented gift of

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Volunteer Profile: Sharon Todd-Urban

Sharon has devoted her life to helping others; whether it's been through working as an Ombudsman for the armed forces or with Navy Relief, or volunteering at hospitals, schools, churches, and food pantries. But when Sharon moved to Bloomington a few years ago she was ready for a new challenge.

"It's a different type of venue for me and a different group of people who I had not worked with before. It's about saving lives and helping people get back on the right track."

Sharon works at Shalom's Hospitality Desk helping clients sign up for casework sessions, JobLinks, and legal aid. She also help register guests for showers and laundry, checks items in and out of long and short-term storage, answers the telephone, takes and distributes messages, provides referral information, and distributes mail. Our Hospitality Desk volunteers take charge of one of the two main hubs of Shalom Center, guaranteeing that clients always get what they need.

When asked how she has grown in the work, Sharon answers that "I'm a little stronger after dealing with tragedy every day, because homelessness is a tragedy. You see all the repercussions of that. It's not that you get numb to it but it makes you a stronger person. You find that you have to be



stronger to help people in need because they need strong people to help them get back on track."

Sharon expressed that her favorite part of working at Shalom is getting to know the guests of the Center.

"I've been at Shalom for 4 years and I've gotten to know some of our long-term clients. It's worthwhile and it's opened up my eyes to a whole new world. We have a predisposed idea of what homelessness is, those who have never been involved in it, and it's quite different from what we think the causes are and the way people are and why they are that way."

Shalom would not function without our dedicated and capable volunteers like Sharon.

Written by Alexzandra Smith, SPEA Intern

Seeing Things Differently

Did you see the article in the December issue of Bloom Magazine, featuring the photography of people experiencing homelessness?

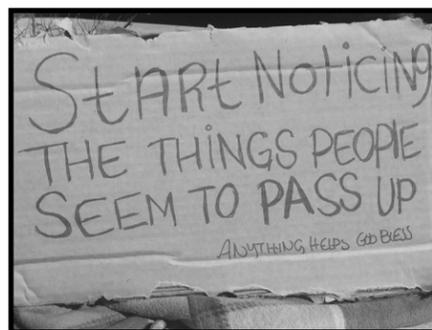
Have you made it to Pictura Gallery for the show?

Prejudice strikes so deeply at the heart of our collective work to end homelessness in our community. As people open up to the humanness of those without homes, transformation becomes possible.

Twelve homeless photographers from ages four to seventy shared their perspective with us, opening our eyes to the world in a different way.

Thank you to Ray, Isaac, Brandi, Galin, Deidre, Jerald, Ron, Amelia, Mike, Teddy, Missie, Alivia, & Darla for their captivating photographs.

Extraordinary thanks to Pictura Gallery and Bloom Magazine for funding and presenting this life-changing project.



A local sign from one of our homeless neighbors, inviting us to see the world a little differently.

Friend's Place (cont. from pg. 1)



Nikki Reising
Program Manager
Friend's Place

\$150,000 to fund the shelter in its first year and \$200,000 in matching funds to help build long-term stability years into the future.*

In January, Shalom took on the management of this important work. The shelter was renamed "Friend's Place" to help remove the stigma of staying in a shelter. A guest of the shelter now can respond to the question of where they are staying simply as a friend's place to avoid the negative associations that come with being homeless.

Shalom Center will undergo a 3 month transition and evaluation period to determine how to move forward as effectively as possible, blending the best of Martha's House and Shalom's wisdom, skill, and history.

Shalom is excited to announce the hiring of Nikki Reising as the program manager for the shelter. Formerly one of Shalom Center's Street Outreach Workers, Nikki will spend the next few months learning and absorbing as much information as possible to make Friend's Place a success.

The ultimate mission of Friend's Place will be to move people from shelter to a home as quickly as possible. Friend's Place will remain a sober shelter while investing in client-centered case management and an assortment of tailored housing approaches, including housing first, rapid re-housing, and subsidized housing.

Reising states, "Ideally we want to work ourselves out of a job; ideally we don't want homelessness in Bloomington anymore."

The shelter will also benefit from the many amazing partnerships Shalom has developed with other agencies, including LifeDesigns, Centerstone, Volunteers in Medicine, Indiana Legal Services, WorkOne, the Bloomington Police Department, countless landlords, and more.

*Look for details this May when we kickoff the campaign for the \$200,000 match.

Written by Rev. Forrest Gilmore, Executive Director with the assistance of Alexzandra Smith, SPEA Intern

Save the Date

Homeward Bound Walk
Sunday, April 10th, 12pm
Third Street Park

Supporter Celebration
Thurs., April 21, 5 -7 pm
Upland Brewery Banquet Room

Friend's Place Open House
May, Date & Time TBD
919 South Rogers St.

The Nancy Saunders Tennis Tournament
Saturday, June 11th
Bloomington High School South

Check out our Facebook page and website for more details as the events get closer.

Ten Gifts You Can Give to Support Our Guests

10. Laundry Soap
9. Toilet Paper
8. Tents
7. Diapers, Sizes 3-5
6. Coffee
5. Razors
4. Sneakers & Flip flops
3. Backpacks
2. Deodorant
1. Rain gear (umbrellas, rain coats, ponchos, tarps)

To make a monetary donation, see the information on the page 4.