



Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line

Embrace. Inspire. Restore.

A Self Sufficiency Program for Homeless Families

Newsletter, Fall 2011

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Norristown, PA 19401

Phone:
610-277-0977

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IHNcares.org

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IHN – Main Line is Celebrating 20 Years of Serving the Homeless



Father James Meehan, Lucetta Alderfer, and Rev. George Hollingshead

Network of the Main Line (IHN – Main Line) to provide services to homeless families and formed a network of congregations to provide shelter, meals, and hospitality to these families.

Rev. George Hollingshead led this group as the first Board Chairperson. He had the help of Rev. William Cherry, Vice-Chairperson; Paul Lichtman, Treasurer; Joe Betz, Secretary; Anne Pilgrim, Executive Director; and many more people who worked together to make their vision a reality.

Over 22 years ago an interfaith group of concerned citizens interested in helping homeless families met with Karen Olson, the founder of the first Interfaith Hospitality Network (now called Family Promise), to discuss the possibility of creating an IHN along the Main Line of Philadelphia. After two years of careful planning, they established the Interfaith Hospitality



Anne Pilgrim

IHN – Main Line became incorporated in November 1991, and we received our non-profit status in June 1992. Our first host congregations included: Ardmore Presbyterian Church, Ardmore United Methodist Church, Beth David Reform Congregation, Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church, Central Baptist Church, Our Mother of Good Counsel, St. John Neumann Church, and St. Thomas of Villanova Parish.



Candy Shandley, Karen Olsen, and Joe Betz



Sister Anne Woodeschick and Mary Jane Adams

Celebrating 20 Years - Cont'd from page 1

On May 3, 1992, Sister Anne Woodeschick opened the doors of Our Mother of Good Counsel's school for the first homeless family we served, Lonnie and her two daughters, Karma and Jasmine. All went well that first night and 20 years later Our Mother of Good Counsel and our current host congregations are still opening their doors and providing a place to sleep and eat a meal for the homeless families we serve.

The volunteers from our 12 host and 16 support congregations provide hospitality, meals, and do all the tasks necessary to house our families. As each volunteer joins our efforts to help a family in need, they also help to build the community of their congregation. As the old proverb says, "It takes a village to raise a child." This is also true with what we do. The community comes together to help a family build a better life for themselves.

It does not stop there. Back in 1993 Anne Pilgrim said, "I was talking to someone who had been in a nice shelter. I asked if this is a nice shelter and she said, 'This is not a shelter. This is an up-and-out place.' And that's what we want to be here. We



Faith Bascom and DiAnna

will push you and push you and push you...."

That continues to be the philosophy of IHN – Main Line today. As it states in our mission, we use the energy of community volunteers to assist families who seek to be accountable, resilient, and strive for a better tomorrow for their families. Our objective is not only to provide shelter for the night but also to give our families the building blocks they need to become permanently self-sufficient. Through our efforts we have helped over 400 families.



Tony and Ellen DeCarlo
Picture by Joan Bang

It has taken many dedicated people to carry out our mission and assist our families. We appreciate everyone who has joined IHN – Main Line along our journey and we know that without our volunteers this organized, collaborative effort to help others would not exist.



Cheney Williams and Samiyah

Happy Anniversary to IHN – Main Line!

A special thank you to all the foundations that supported the Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line last year.

- Ally Bank
- Beneficial Savings Bank
- Louis N. Cassett Foundation
- Catholic Human Services Foundation
- Claneil Foundation
- Connelly Foundation
- The Emergency Aid of Pennsylvania Foundation. Inc.
- Fourjay Foundation
- Genuardi's (Employees) Foundation

- Genuardi Family Foundation
- GT Foundation
- Patricia Kind Family Foundation
- McLean Contributionship
- Montgomery County Foundation
- Montgomery County Medical Society Foundation
- Morgan Stanley Foundation
- The Grace S. & W. Linton Nelson Foundation
- Sovereign Bank

Sister Anne Woodshick Nominated for Award

Sister Anne Woodshick has been an IHN – Main Line Coordinator since 1992. In fact she welcomed our first IHN – Main Line homeless family to Our Mother of Good Counsel their first day in our Network in 1992. She was recently recognized by the Main Line Media News when she was nominated for their 12th annual Volunteer of the Year award for her dedication and service to IHN – Main Line. She was honored at a ceremony held at the Montrose Mansion at the Villanova Conference Center on June 22, 2011. She was also chosen as the Volunteer of the Week in their September 21, 2011 issue of Main Line Suburban Life. Sister Anne has brought a special mixture of compassion and wisdom to her role as Coordinator and has made a lasting positive impact on the families that have come through our program. Thank you, Sister Anne, for all you have done for our families.

IHN – Main Line Named Champion in Action

IHN – Main Line was chosen as a Champion in Action by Citizens Bank for our work with homeless families. Citizens, along with NBC10, the Philadelphia Inquirer, Philadelphia Daily News, Greater Philadelphia Cares, and Philly.com, choose one agency a quarter that excels at serving a specific social concern. Through this award we will receive \$25,000, volunteers, and media coverage. We are honored to receive the award!

IHN – Main Line Welcomes a New Clinical Therapist

Krystalyn Davis joins IHN – Main Line as our new Clinical Therapist. IHN – Main Line created this new position to help our families deal with the stress and depression of being homeless. Krystalyn meets with the adults in our program on an individual basis to help them cope with the stresses in their lives. She began meeting with the adults in our program in September. With her assistance, our families will have an easier stay in our program as they rebuild their lives.

The Holidays

The holidays are a busy and stressful time for most families and this is even more so for homeless families. It also gives us a special chance to help the families in our program. This year we are accepting gift cards (from Wal-Mart, Target, Toys R Us, etc.) in lieu of presents for the families in our program. Please send the gifts cards to the IHN – Main Line, 1449 DeKalb St., Norristown, PA 19401. Thank you.

Message from the Board Chairperson

Dear Friends of IHN,

The Interfaith Hospitality Network is growing! We are excited to see support and growth from the community as we move forward with our goal of supporting families during a time of hardship in their lives.

As Chair of the Board, it is my hope for continued engagement with the families as well as our organization as a whole. When we are able to come together as a community, it is impressive the lives we can touch. Since last year, IHN has served 14 families with three more currently in the program.

It is encouraging to feel the support and celebrate the gains that IHN has made during this time. From a new facility, designed with IHN in mind, at Beth David Reform Congregation, to significant monetary donations from organizations like Citizen's Bank's Champion in Action program, we know that IHN is doing great work. Join me in this time of celebration as we look back on where we have been and look forward to where we are going.

Sincerely,

Derek M. Luther

Thank you Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church for providing the printing for this newsletter



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1449 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

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Together we can make a lasting difference by breaking the cycle of homelessness.

Our Mission

The mission of the Interfaith Hospitality Network of the Main Line is to *provide a caring and positive environment for homeless families and their children while they design and implement a plan to break the cycle of homelessness in their lives. Using the energy of over 2,500 community volunteers we are dedicated to families who seek to be accountable, resilient, and strive for a better tomorrow for their families.*

How you can make a real difference in the life of a homeless family in need:

Volunteer your time: make a meal, turn a congregational space into a home for our families, help children with homework, or spend time with a homeless family.

Contact Sue at 610-277-0977 to learn more about how you can volunteer.

Make a Donation: your tax deductible contribution will go a long way towards helping our families reach self-sufficiency.

Donate by mail: Send your tax deductible check or money order to: IHN – Main Line
1449 DeKalb Street
Norristown, PA 19401

Donate on-line: Visit www.IHNCares.org and click on the Make a Donation link.