

House of Hope Newsletter

812 Merrimack Street, Lowell MA 01854

(978) 458-2870

www.hopelowell.org

December 2015

Dear Friends,

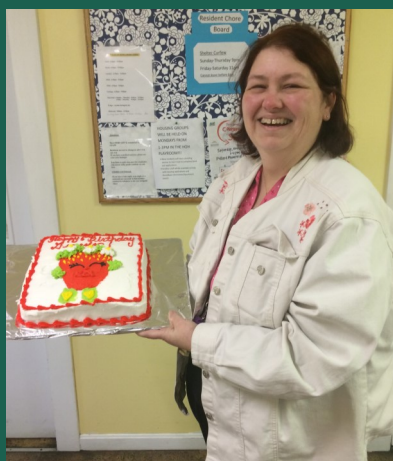
As you will see by reading our newsletter we continue to receive a great deal of support from many individuals, groups, churches and businesses, and we are deeply grateful because the numbers of families who need House of Hope is greater today than yesterday. I am proud of the success that we have had providing shelter for many hundreds of families and helping them to move into homes of their own. I am equally proud of our ability to create permanent housing for some of the families that we serve. Tonight 28 families will be sheltered and 22 families are in our permanent housing. Many of you have contributed to House of Hope's success by donating time, talents or treasure, or by prayerfully remembering and encouraging us, or by talking about us and your first hand knowledge of our focused and loving mission.



We do celebrate this support but our hearts are heavy because as hard as we try self-sufficiency is increasingly more difficult for our families to achieve. Most of our mothers have inadequate earning potential due to limited skills, to difficulty in accessing subsidized day care, and to the low-paying wages in the service and retail industries. Homeless families are living in motels and shelters for longer periods of time which takes a toll on both the mums and the kids. This is especially true for homeless families in motels and, in spite of general agreement that long stays in motels is not adequate, there is precious little alternative. The HOH family of board, staff and volunteers continues to seek out ways to do more especially for the long-staying families in motels. We feel compelled to figure out how to leverage all of the support that we have in order to do more for more families. Potential projects have come and gone and we are currently working diligently on an opportunity that we believe will benefit homeless families and our local community. Please stay tuned and we will share more information as soon as we are able. Until that time, please continue to support House of Hope and House of Hope Housing as we provide shelter, housing and support services to all of the families under each of our roofs! With the Best Blessings to you for a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season.

Fondly,
Deb Chausse, Executive Director

Knock, Knock, Who's There?



Betsy Feele of Medford bakes a cake for every child who has a birthday while living at House of Hope.



The Middlesex Community College Helping Hands Club serves a holiday meal at the shelter!



We recently had a visit from Donald Duck! A great big thank you to volunteers Austin and Christy Desisto for making these special moments happen.



HOH NEEDS LIST

Boxes of Tissues
Coffee Mugs
Diapers size 4,5,6

Dinner Plates
Canned Tuna
Baby Wipes

Deodorant
Baby Lotions
Snacks (Crackers, chips, granola bars, popcorn)

Lip Balm
Slippers (adults & kids)

COOL MOVES

House of Hope is happy to announce that we have had two BIG months for "moving on!" Five families moved out of shelter and into permanent housing in October, and seven more families moved into housing in November! Case Managers help our residents navigate moving paperwork, set up local family services, and minimize the disruption for the children involved in the moves.



HOH in NYC

Deborah Chausse and the management team at HOH have been selected to present at the Beyond Housing 2016 Conference hosted by the **Institute for Children, Poverty and Homelessness**. The conference will take place January 13-15, 2016 in New York City. The Presentation is entitled **"Shelters CAN Become Landlords: BUT IT ISN'T EASY!"** We will articulate how we achieved this very challenging goal with the hope of inspiring and supporting other small shelters around the country. Owning the shelter that also serves families as tenants means that we know them and they know us ... we are already a part of the same community. HOH will share the "how to" of creating a road map that leads toward the development and operation of self-sustaining permanent housing for vulnerable families who will benefit from housing when it is available in conjunction with supportive services.

The Hope Chest

The Hope Chest provides on-the-job training for parents who are residents at our shelters. So far this year we have had 15 internships! The interns work 20 hours a week. In addition to developing retail and customer service skills, interns sort out all the donations and then they bring them to the store.

The Hope Chest has been a great tool for the interns to be able to find employment. Just within the last month, two of the interns secured good jobs; one at McLean Hospital in Belmont, MA and one at Walmart. Our community has been great with donations; we currently need donations of gently used bibs, onesies, receiving blankets, socks, snow boots, pajamas, winter coats (no stains please :-)) - *Luz Vasudevan, Program Manager*

**PLEASE DONATE
GENTLY-USED
CLOTHING!**

— Newborn to Teen —

Bring donations to:
812 Merrimack St,
Lowell, MA
8AM-8PM 7 days/week
978-458-2870

TAX DEDUCTIBLE!

The Hope Chest provides
job training for recently
homeless parents. All
proceeds go to House of Hope.



THE 2015 HARVEST OF HOPE BENEFIT

So many dear friends joined us at this year's Harvest of Hope Benefit! We welcomed 150 guests with the lighthearted acknowledgement that "There's No Place Like Home" which was celebrated with a Wizard of Oz theme at the stylish and inviting home of Michael Conway in Lowell. It was a record-setting fundraiser and one heck of a party! Thanks to your generosity, \$75,000 was raised for HOH Shelters and HOH Housing; it is a good year to shatter records due to the increasing demand for shelter and support for homeless families.

Laurie Gould was recognized at the Harvest, with deep appreciation for all of her efforts supporting the creation of House of Hope Housing and serving as our board president since 2012. Laurie has served HOH and HOH Housing in remarkable ways over the years, especially related to our permanent housing efforts. Laurie has stepped down as president, yet (thank heavens!) she remains on the board. Laurie led us through the inevitable twisters and storms, helping us to believe that, in spite of our efforts to operate loving shelters, the reality is: THERE IS NO PLACE LIKE HOME. Thank you, Laurie!



*Deb Chausse presents Laurie Gould
with a gift of appreciation*

Check out our Harvest pics on the next page! We hope you enjoy the color pictures in this Holiday newsletter edition!



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

OFFICERS: Daniel O'Connor, President; Daniel Mansur, Esq, Vice-President;
Brian Stafford, CPA., Treasurer; Dale Makowski, Secretary

DIRECTORS: Yovani Baez, Brian Bonenfant, Andrew Boyle, Ellen Cataldo, Ryan Dunn, Diane Earl, Laurie Gould,
Rev. Cecilio Hernandez, Nels Palm, Emily Moloney Smith, Esq, Patricia Sullivan Talty, Esq, Marc Teal, Kate Tyndall

Hope smiles from the threshold of the year to come, whispering, 'It will be happier.' - Alfred Lord Tennyson

This Newsletter is being sent to you, our community of supporters, with the very Best Blessings for a Happy and Healthy Holiday Season. We continue to hope for the day when our services are not needed and our national discussion becomes about reducing poverty for millions of families. Until that day, we commit to doing as much for homeless families as we possibly can. We thank you and sincerely ask that you continue to be active in sustaining our mission!



PRETTY CRAFTY

Once a week, a staff member leads our parents in an adult crafting session. It is a very fun and therapeutic night for our parents. Parents are learning something new and making an item that they can keep when they leave shelter. **We are in need of the following items:**

Scissors
Assorted Pom Poms
String in any color
Wooden objects (frames, trinket boxes, animals)



We Need Giving Trees!

The shelter is in need of small gift cards. Gift cards are used as holiday gifts for shelter parents and for families who first arrive in shelter in need of key items like clothing. Some of the most useful gift cards are Walmart, Target, Payless Shoes, Visa/MasterCard that can be used anywhere, gas stations, CVS, Rite Aid, Walgreens and Market Basket. If interested, please contact Edna Gustafson at 978-458-2870 or at edna.gustafson@hopelowell.org.



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