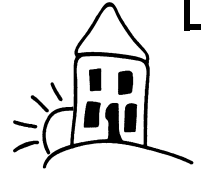


Edition Thirteen



Spring, 2007

# Network News

*The 2006 Adopt-a-Family Program assisted 198 children and adults to help make their holidays brighter.*

## Message from Marc, Successes Due to Community Involvement

In this edition of Network News, I want to acknowledge the strong community support that is essential to the success of many of our programs, including the **2006 CHN Adopt-a-Family Program** and the **2007 Everyone Counts Project** of the Oakland County Taskforce on Homelessness and Affordable Housing. The response to our call for help with both endeavors was tremendous. I was overwhelmed by the number of people who contributed their time and money to help families in our **Leasing Assistance Program** have a good holiday. Many of these volunteers are continuing to help us on an ongoing basis.

It was bitter cold and snowing hard on the night of the count. We met families with children who were sleeping outside in those conditions, which was heart wrenching and inexcusable. Some volunteers were so moved by their participation in the project that they too have asked to assist CHN homeless programs on an ongoing basis.

I'm glad we are developing a greater community understanding about the nature of homelessness and of living with disabilities. And I applaud the willingness of people in Oakland County to come forward to help out when they learn that help is needed.

I want to thank other community leaders including Jeff Brown of the **Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority**, for putting the street count front and center to obtain recognition, and Oakland County Commissioner, Jim Nash, for supporting our efforts and those of the **Oakland County Taskforce on Homelessness and Affordable Housing**. Let's all of us keep up the good work.

Our community also demonstrated its' volunteer spirit in the 2007 Everyone Counts Project, held on the night of January 24th. Approximately 200 volunteers worked to secure an actual count of homeless persons living on the streets in Oakland County. Many of these volunteers reported stirring, and in some cases, life changing experiences.



A brother & sister enjoy opening gifts received from generous donors.

**Over 120 donors & volunteers contributed a total of \$23,000. and 230 hours of their time to make the CHN Adopt-a-Family a success.**

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## A Tribute to Anthony Filippis

*"Each generation is better off than the last," Mr. Filippis recently said, "and it's our job to see to it that we make this world a better place for everyone."*



Mr. Filippis was a consistent supporter of CHN and is seen here at the 2005 Homes Coalition Event.

*Mr. Filippis' hard work and vision have brought hope to thousands of disabled persons, nurturing belief and fulfilling dreams.*

Community Housing Network and many other organizations working on behalf of people with disabilities lost a true friend and benefactor this year. Anthony (Tony) Filippis Sr., a nationally-known and beloved icon in the movement to improve the lives of persons with disabilities, passed away at the age of 91.

The founder of **Wright & Filippis, Inc.**, Michigan's largest provider of home healthcare products and full-spectrum services for the disabled, Mr. Filippis dedicated his personal and professional life to assisting persons with disabilities.

Mr. Filippis experienced first-hand the frustration and heartache frequently confronted by persons with disabilities when he lost both of his legs below the knee in a train accident at the age of thirteen.

As a young man, Mr. Filippis became discouraged over losing jobs because he had artificial limbs. He took his anger and frustration to Carl Wright, who had made his artificial legs.

Wright offered him a job as an apprentice. Mr. Filippis worked at the Martin-Halstead Co. for ten years before he and Wright formed their own company - Wright & Filippis. While his keen business savvy and eye for detail helped build Wright & Filippis into one the nation's most successful private medical enterprises, Mr. Filippis' enthusiastic support for the rights of the disabled was unrivaled. The disappointments and discrimination he faced as a young man fueled his passion for making a difference in the lives of others. Mr. Filippis used the success he enjoyed in the business world to blaze a trail for Michigan's disabled athletes and participated in many sports himself. He made sports history in 1999 when he founded the **Athletes with Disabilities Hall of Fame**. Not surprisingly, Mr. Filippis has been honored many times over the years for his significant contributions.

Members of the Community Housing staff and numerous CHN program participants have been inspired by Mr. Filippis' example of courage and leadership.

## Success Story - Robin Moak

Robin Moak has a great deal to contribute about the ins' and outs' of living on one's own with a disability. She has been living independently, with some assistance from supportive services, for twenty-five years.

Born with Cerebral Palsy, Robin was raised by her mother in a low-income household. She enjoyed most of the normal activities kids do while attending school. After high school, she successfully completed a nurse's aid vocational training program. She has been working in part-time health care, child care or retail positions for most of her adult life.

Robin has received services for her disability throughout her life and appreciates the many ways MORC helps her to live as fully as possible. Currently, a support staff person helps her four hours a day, six days a week. Since Robin cannot drive, this person provides transportation to doctors, stores, family visits, and to a weight loss clinic. Robin is very proud that she has lost a great deal of weight and is committed to

keeping herself on a disciplined regime of healthy eating and moderate exercise.

Over the years Robin has acquired a strong support system in addition to the services she receives from MORC. She spends time talking on the phone with her many friends and attends the monthly CHN **Independent Living Club** meetings.

Robin regularly participates in the Special Olympics, bowling, and local dances. Her one bedroom apartment is partially paid for by the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. Even with that help, she must budget very carefully to make ends meet. She is grateful for small things; like being able to walk to nearby stores, and caring for her cat and two birds. Robin's life is good because she does not let the obstacles surrounding her disability determine her identity. She continues to shape her life through persistence, hard work, and self-acceptance.



Robin Moak has been living independently for most of her adult life.

***Robin does not let the obstacles surrounding her disability determine her identity. "If I can do it (live independently), then anyone can." she notes.***



Robin Moak enjoys spending time with her cat in her one-bedroom apartment.

### Network News

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**Community Housing Network, Inc.**, is a non-profit community organization dedicated to promoting inclusive communities through affordable housing.

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You can help someone with a disability find safe and affordable housing by donating that old vehicle to Charity Motors. Vehicles need not run....Free timely pick-up. Please call Charity Motors at (313) 255-1000 and designate COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK as your charity of choice.



### Community Housing Network Produces New Housing Video

Community Housing Network is pleased to announce the

introduction of a new video about housing options for people with disabilities. The thirty minute video, **"Creating Inclusive Communities"** presents highlights about planning for affordable housing. The video will be available at the end of April, 2007 at no cost to the public. Contact CHN at 248-928-0111 to request a copy of this new and instructive video.

### Upcoming Events

**May 2 - Rally in Lansing**

**May 7 - Keys to Total Health**

The Marriott Detroit/Troy 8:00 a.m. to 3:15 p.m. Sponsored by The Oakland County Community Mental Health Authority and Core Providers

**May 10 - Workshop: Tenant/Landlord Relationships** CHN Offices, 10:00 a.m. until 12 noon

**May 24 - Walk-a-Mile in My Shoes Rally** at State Capitol in Lansing

**June 14 -Workshop: Budgeting & Credit Repair** CHN Offices, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**July 12 - Workshop: Section 8 and Subsidized Housing** CHN Offices, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

**COMING IN SEPTEMBER: ANNUAL HOMES COALITION FUNDRAISING EVENT FOR COMMUNITY HOUSING NETWORK**