



Edition Fifteen

Community Housing Network, Inc.

Promoting Inclusive Communities Through Affordable Housing



Fall, 2007

Network News

“Even one homeless person in our community is unacceptable. We should have zero tolerance for homelessness and must advocate to that end.”

**Marc Craig, CHN
President & CEO**

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Message from Marc: The Importance of Advocacy

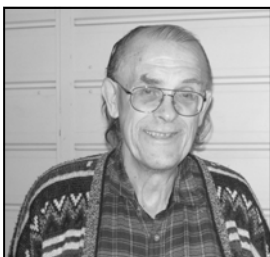
In this holiday issue, I want to talk about the need for advocacy and increased awareness about the work we do at Community Housing Network. This was a goal at our recent **Homerun for Homelessness** event. Many attendees knew little about homelessness, yet came away with an increased understanding of the problem and a greater connection to the people we serve. We want to continue encouraging that kind of connection. We must persist in our efforts to inform more people about homelessness and the fact that people with disabilities make up half the homeless population. Those who make that connection will be more committed to advocating for more affordable housing for the people who most need it.

Our effective community based service delivery system can be even more successful when people first have a decent, safe place to live. We must insist that our elected officials and policy makers at federal, state and county levels, provide sufficient resources for affordable housing that is both needed and desirable. Our philosophy is that this should be inclusive housing that does not contribute to segregating people with disabilities from their fellow citizens in the community. If we are going to secure more resources to get this work done; the way to do it is through community awareness and advocacy. I and the CHN staff thank you for your continued support this past year and wish you all a season of hope and love.

Success Story: Alan Curtis Finds Great Roommate

Sixty-three year old Alan Curtis is a friendly, outgoing man who desperately needed a good roommate to share his ranch style home in Warren. Alan, who has a developmental disability, lived with his parents in the house until they passed away. He got help from his brothers, but needed more assistance and someone to share expenses. Over the years, Alan had roommates from commercial agencies, but they stole, did drugs, drank, and destroyed his property. Alan noted, “I just couldn’t take it anymore and started doing some hard praying about the situation.” He was put in touch with Community Housing

Network Peer Support Specialist, Karen Webster. They talked about how to screen for a roommate and Karen gave him some leads from the CHN Roommate Database. Alan found Dan, with whom he has been happily sharing his place for a year. Dan enjoys helping Alan with the housekeeping. He cuts the grass, does all the cooking, and takes Alan to church each week. Dan is a quiet person and works outside the home during the day. He had signed up on the CHN Roommate Database and was happy to have found a good place to live. Both men feel fortunate to have made such a good match.



Alan Curtis was thrilled to find a friendly, reliable and helpful roommate through the CHN Roommate Database.

Network News

"Tonight, there are over two thousand people who are homeless in Oakland and Macomb counties. And the saddest part is that the average age of those people is only nine years."

Marc Craig



HOMES Coalition Co-Founders, Cindy Boudreau & David Layne (back) congratulate Nancy Hakala, (front) who received the "Friends of the Disability Community" award on behalf of her late father, Tony Filippis Sr.



Special guest & Tiger Great, Milt Wilcox with CHN President, Marc Craig



CHN Housing Navigator, Jennifer Williams, CHN Program Participant, Tim Cornell, & Tim's Case Manager, Pat Christian

Homerun for Homelessness Spotlights CHN

On September 20, 2007, a gala evening at Andiamo Italia in Warren, marked the 7th annual banquet and silent auction to benefit Community Housing Network. Sponsored by the HOMES Coalition & CHN, the festivities featured the theme, **Homerun for Homelessness**. Over 225 guests were present to enjoy a great meal and to compete for extravagant silent auction items. Special guests and former Tiger greats, Milt Wilcox and Dave Rozema greeted attendees. Strolling musician, Rinaldo, serenaded everyone throughout the excellent dinner.

HOMES Coalition co-founder, Cindy Boudreau welcomed the guests and Marc Craig, CHN President and CEO, gave the opening remarks. He noted, "We have experienced much success and have helped many people. But tonight won't be a home run unless people leave knowing that what we do is extremely important in individual lives, and that they follow up by taking action, by telling their friends about our work, and by staying in touch and involved throughout the year."

Mr. Craig then spoke about James who has developmental disabilities. James lost his home and job through no fault of his own. He ended up living in a garage. CHN got him back into an apartment and he now has a new job. "James and others like him are the reasons that keep us working at CHN," Marc said. He closed by introducing five CHN program participants. The room was filled with applause for the people who were turning their lives around

because others cared.

After dinner David Layne, Co-Founder of the HOMES Coalition, presented the first "Friends of the Disability Community" award. The honor was accepted on behalf of Tony Filippis Sr. by his daughter, Nancy Hakala. A rousing live auction and intense bidding followed. Some of the items included valuable jewelry, art, sports memorabilia, and vacation getaway packages.

Generous donors made the evening a financial success that raised \$35,000 to further the work of Community Housing Network. The event was also considered a success because many people left with a greater understanding and appreciation of CHN's work and of the people with disabilities they serve.

Finally, we offer a special note of thanks to the following sponsors:

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(Cindy Boudreau & Ken Kacy)

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2007 Adopt-a-Family Program Brings Joy to Many

The Adopt-a-Family wish lists have been filled and gifts have been wrapped by our CHN volunteers. Festive holiday packages have been delivered to many formerly homeless families participating in the CHN Supportive Housing Leasing Assistance programs. Many dreams will come true this holiday, thanks to the generosity of our volunteers and donors, who gave of their time and resources.

- Dreams come true of new coats, hats, gloves, and boots to keep the winter chill at bay.
- Dreams come true of blankets and bedding, where none were to be had in the homeless past.
- And dreams come true of that special toy. Santa could not find the house last year because there was no place to live.

A few years ago we discovered, even though we were able to give people a home, their apartments

often remained bare. Our families lived without items like bedding, lamps, towels, personal care items, dishes, and warm winter clothing. That is how the Adopt-a-Family program began and why it continues to this day.

The response to our 2007 Adopt-a-Family program has been overwhelming. This year we were able to exceed our expectations. The outpouring of donations, gifts, and volunteer time has allowed us to make a good Holiday and a comfortable home for scores of deserving people. We sincerely thank everyone who helped with this tremendous effort.

We also assist our families throughout the year, as many need further help with items we cannot provide through our contracts and grants. Please visit our website: www.communityhousingnetwork.org, to learn more about you can help.

CHN Year Round Wish List

- Bus Pass Cards
- Taxi Vouchers
- Grocery Store Gift Cards
- Gift Cards for Items not Covered by Food Stamps
- Cleaning Supplies & Tools
- Computer Software
- Cell Phones with GO Phone plans
- Household Items & Used Furniture
- Seasonal Children's Clothing

CHN Volunteer Opportunities

- Photographer Services
- Marketing or Public Relations Assistance
- Minor Auto Repair Assistance
- General Office Assistance
- Minor Home Repairs
- Snow Removal

Upcoming Events

CHN Workshops

All workshops are held 10:00 a.m. to 12 Noon at the CHN Offices

January 10, 2008 - Housing Resource Center - What It Is!

February 14, 2008, Section 8 and Subsidized Housing

March 13, 2008 - How Do I Select a Roommate?

Independent Living Club Meetings

All Meetings are held at the CHN Offices from 6:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

January 21, 2008 - The new CHN video, "Building Inclusive Communities" will be shown with discussion to follow.

February 18, 2008 - Manners: How They Can Help Us to Grow Toward Independence

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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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In Appreciation

On behalf of the many deserving people we serve; the Board and Staff at Community Housing Network want to express our appreciation to all those who have been so generous with their time, talents, and financial resources. We could not further our mission to end homelessness by creating affordable housing for people with disabilities without your kind support.

We proudly work together with the communities we serve.

We're proud to partner with outstanding organizations like the Community Housing Network team!

National City is proud to work with Community Housing Network in its affordable housing programs, community efforts, and in its Home Run for Homelessness.

National City.

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