



Dwelling Place

NONE OF US ARE HOME UNTIL ALL OF US ARE HOME

BEAUTIFUL STORIES FRIENDSHIP, DIGNITY, AND THE POWER OF TRANSFORMATION

OVER THE PAST several months, people throughout our region have been reading Steve Lopez's remarkable memoir *The Soloist*, the 2009 choice of the One Book One Philadelphia program. Thousands have participated in book groups or attended special talks or panel discussions about the book and the issues it raises of homelessness and mental illness.

If you've read *The Soloist*, you know it is a powerful and moving true story of the friendship that journalist Steve Lopez (a long-time friend of Project H.O.M.E.) forms with Nathaniel Ayers, a man living on the streets with a serious mental illness. Steve is initially drawn to Nathaniel's amazing musical talent and finds out that he once studied at Juilliard, one of the preeminent music schools in the world. Throughout the book, he tries to understand Nathaniel's struggles and to encourage him to take advantage of services. More importantly, along the way, Steve is drawn into a deeper awareness of human dignity and finds himself being transformed by the relationship.

The timing of the book is serendipitous, as Project H.O.M.E. celebrates its twentieth anniversary throughout 2009. (And like us, many of you may be eagerly awaiting the film version of the book, due to open nationwide about the time you are receiving this edition of *Dwelling Place*.) Steve's relationship with Nathaniel corroborates so much of our experience over the past two decades. As we have sought to develop solutions to chronic homelessness, we recognize the important interface of two factors: the inestimable value of relationships and community, and the availability of effective housing and services. Neither on its own is sufficient to bring about full healing, but together they make the stuff of miraculous transformations – not just for persons struggling to get off the streets, but for all of us.

STORIES LIKE THAT of Steve and Nathaniel happen constantly at Project H.O.M.E. Frequently, special relationships emerge through volunteering. As you receive this newsletter, Project

H.O.M.E. is celebrating, along with organizations around the country, National Volunteer Week (April 19-25). We are grateful for the

contributions of time, energy, and talents by our hundreds of marvelous volunteers (see page 3), but just as important, we honor the amazing bonds of friendship and community that so often form and are so vital to our mission.

Two years ago, Rosemary and Carmen started volunteering at our Kairos House residence. Initially, they believed their volunteering would simply be to provide activities for residents, all of whom have a mental health diagnosis. Over time, their volunteering evolved into more than arts and

crafts, walking clubs, and birthday parties. A special friendship formed between the two volunteers and Susan (not her real name), a quiet participant in the weekly activities.

A year ago, Susan moved into independent housing, where she has been enjoying her own space. On a regular basis, the trio get together to shop, run errands, go to Mass, and have lunch. They even talk on the phone occasionally.

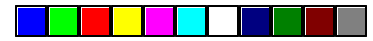
Rosemary and Carmen say they are the ones who have learned about generosity from Susan. They recall how Susan, who had returned to Kairos House for a recent birthday for a current resident, helped that resident by making her bed, quietly and without praise. Rosemary observes that Susan doesn't do things to be appreciated.

Rosemary says her friendship with Susan has added a new dimension to her life. She does not know exactly what drew them together, but feels there is a sense of mutual respect. They have come to accept each other for who they are without pretense or concern for what either of them needed. Rosemary and Carmen are happy to be there for Susan as she lives independently after experiencing homelessness, and they are sustained by a growing and significant friendship in their lives. "I believe that God must have had a hand in our encounter," Rosemary says of her relationship with Susan. "I am a better woman for having known her."

(Continued on page 2)



Looking Back Over 20 Years: The photo above by Harvey Finkle was taken in 1990. Horace Green (left) was a resident in our very first emergency winter shelter in 1989, then moved on to transitional and later a permanent housing unit on Diamond Street, where he lived until his death in 1994. Joan Dawson McConnon (right) was originally a volunteer for Project H.O.M.E., while working as a CPA during the day, when she helped get that first shelter. She is currently our Chief Financial Officer.



BEAUTIFUL STORIES *(continued from page 1)*

NOT ALL OF US are brilliant classical musicians or respected writers, like in *The Soloist*. But all of us have gifts, potential, dignity, and beauty. The story of Steve and Nathaniel, or of Rosemary, Carmen, and Susan -- or the countless other stories that happen on a daily basis at Project H.O.M.E. -- reveal what is possible when we form relationships and community rooted in a vision of human dignity and the common good. These friendships, whether through a formal volunteer program or more informally, keep us human, because when we share in another's suffering or isolation, the bonds that are formed create possibilities for transformation.

We have witnessed such beautiful stories and transformations countless times over the past twenty years, and we draw hope from them. They have given us an unquenchable confidence that homelessness is solvable. We take that hope into our next twenty years -- and with your continuing support, there will be many more beautiful stories.

When we share in another's suffering, the bonds that are formed create possibilities for transformation.

News from H.O.M.E.

A HEALING RESPITE

As we go to press, we are in the final days of our short-term winter respite for women with serious mental illness who have been living on the streets, which was operated in the basement of 1515 Fairmount Avenue. Over forty women were served by the respite since its opening in February, of which 25 stayed on a regular basis. Well over half of the regular guests took significant steps toward getting appropriate housing and services to help them break the cycle of homelessness. Thanks to the many staff and residents of Project H.O.M.E. who helped make this much-needed program possible, and thanks to the many volunteers who provided food, resources, and companionship for our guests. The respite was entirely funded by individuals. A special thanks to our friend Jon Bon Jovi whose amazing generosity and leadership made it possible for us to welcome so many women home.

PROGRESS ON NEW HOUSING

While we continue to struggle with the growing numbers of persons on the streets, we are also making tremendous progress on the development of our newest housing endeavor, St. John's. This joint venture between Project H.O.M.E. and Bethesda Project will provide 79 units of permanent supportive housing in Center City for formerly homeless men and women. We will soon be closing with the Redevelopment Authority of the City of Philadelphia, the Pennsylvania Housing Finance Agency



Steve Lopez, author of The Soloist, took time during his recent Philadelphia trip to visit members of the Project H.O.M.E. community at our Kate's Place residence in Center City. During his days as a columnist for the Philadelphia Inquirer, Steve wrote several columns about Project H.O.M.E.

Photo by Jim Harris

and Enterprise, our equity investor. We hope to announce the official groundbreaking sometime later this spring. Our current construction schedule would allow us to open the new facility by November 2010.

SOUTHERN EXPOSURE

Several Project H.O.M.E. artists showcased their work at a special exhibit at the ArteMystic Gallery at 243 South Street in Philadelphia. The show ran through much of April, and provided a wonderful venue for the beautiful work of our artists to reach new audiences.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Project H.O.M.E.'s very own Ed Speedling was honored with the Philadelphia Commission on Human Relations Human Rights Award. Ed, the Community

Liaison for our Outreach Coordination Center, has been a tireless advocate for the dignity and rights of persons who are homeless, while working to address how solutions to homelessness are part of broader community health and well-being. He is an inspiration to all of us.

BUDGET BATTLES

The *Vote For Homes!* coalition, under the leadership of Project H.O.M.E., has been leading a city-wide campaign to respond to the City's budget crisis, urging the Nutter Administration not to make cuts that would affect the most vulnerable citizens including those who are homeless. We were gratified when

Mayor Nutter released a budget plan that would keep City-funded homeless services intact, as well as maintaining other essential services, such as libraries, recreation centers, and health centers. As we go to press, we are working with City Council representatives, who will soon be voting on the budget, urging them to likewise commit to ensuring services for our needy citizens. For information on our advocacy efforts and how you can get involved, see www.voteforhomes.org.

HIGH INFLUENCE

Project H.O.M.E.'s co-founder and Executive Director Sister Mary Scullion was among the nominees for the 2009 "TIME 100," an annual list by *Time Magazine* of the world's most influential people. To cast your vote for Sister Mary, go to www.time.com/time/time100.



MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

Honoring our Faithful Volunteers

VOLUNTEERS ARE AN INTEGRAL PART of the Project H.O.M.E. community. Since our beginnings twenty years ago, the creativity, dedication, and talent of volunteers have driven the organization's successes. Whether it's by serving on the Board of Trustees, baking a cake for a birthday party, offering legal advice on acquisition of a property, tutoring a child in our After School Programs, consulting with staff on mental health needs of residents, driving residents to the polls on election day -- volunteers build and supplement the capacity of the staff at Project H.O.M.E. to fulfill our mission.

As one staff member said recently of a volunteer, "After some time, she has become a member of the family." Volunteers offer the gift of time to residents and program participants, who in turn know that volunteers truly *want* to be there. That sends an important message of valuing people, and means a stronger community.

There are numerous ways for volunteers to support the mission of Project H.O.M.E. Some of our current needs include:

- Technical help with compiling and editing video footage of Project H.O.M.E. from over the years.
- Tutors to assist teens in the After School Program at least once a week for an hour and a half to two hours, between 3:30 and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday
- Facilitators for groups with the K-6 After School Program between 3:30 and 6:00 on Fridays. Suggested group topics include arts and crafts, drama, dance, science, music, health and nutrition.
- Help with management of database for a memorial webpage for deceased members of the Project H.O.M.E. community.
- Tutors for adults in literacy for approximately two hours/week for a minimum of six weeks. Time is flexible on weekdays between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.

To become a part of the Project H.O.M.E. community, contact our Volunteer Coordinator, Erin O'Brien, at 215-232-7272, ext. 3015, or erinobrien@projecthome.org.

HOPE IN TOUGH TIMES

IN THESE TOUGH ECONOMIC times, the work of Project H.O.M.E. is even more urgent. We are grateful to our many donors who keep our work going strong. Some of our recent major donors include the following:

- AEG Live, LLC
- Mr. Jeff Allen
- Bryn Clovis Foundation
- Clayman Family Foundation
- Rena Rowan Damone and Vic Damone
- Greenfield Foundation
- John and Chara Haas
- The Hamilton Family Foundation
- Tony and Lynn Hitschler
- Mr. and Mrs. Paul James Hondros
- Independence Foundation
- Mr. Arthur M. Kaplan and Mr. R. Duane Perry
- James and Katherine Ledwith
- Klehr, Harrison, Harvey, Branzburg & Ellers, LLP
- Dr. Deborah Anna Luepnitz
- Mrs. Elizabeth R. Moran
- J. Patrick and Alicia O'Grady
- Pat and Victoria Pasquariello
- The Philadelphia Foundation
- Philadelphia Insurance Companies
- PNC Bank
- Anne and Bruce Robinson
- Saints Peter and Paul Rectory
- Samuel S. Fels Fund
- James and Marie Seward
- Staples Foundation for Learning
- United Way of Southeastern PA



From the very beginning,...

This photo shows our very first shelter in 1989, which was run almost entirely by volunteers, at the Marian Anderson Recreation Center. Resident Alvin Bing ("Chico") is serenaded by Nancy Jean on Easter, when a group of volunteers brought a fancy dinner and celebrated with the men throughout the day.



THIS MOTHERS DAY, honor your mother or another mother through a gift to Project H.O.M.E. We will send a special Mother's Day card to the

mother you are honoring. Your gift will bring light and joy to families coping with homelessness and poverty.

Visit www.projecthome.org to make your gift.

Special thanks to Lynne Honickman for underwriting our Mothers Day Appeal.

Women Empowering Women



Tuesday, May 12,
6:00 - 9:00 p.m.
The Phoenix,
1600 Arch Steet
Center City

Join us for a fun-filled fashion event hosted by the Phoenix Salon & Spa

to benefit Project H.O.M.E. *Women Empowering Women* will bring compelling, intelligent, and diverse women from all walks of life together for an evening of inspiration, empowerment, and entertainment. Members of the Project H.O.M.E. community will model clothing generously provided by Macy's and the Elizabeth Maar Boutique. The event will also include a fantastic silent auction. Proceeds will support our work to assist homeless and low-income men, women, and families. Tickets are \$50 in advance at www.projecthome.org; \$60 at the door. For information, contact Karen Brooks, Project H.O.M.E.'s Manager of Annual Giving, at 215-232-7272, ext. 3045. Sponsorship opportunities available!



PROJECT H.O.M.E.

1515 Fairmount Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19130

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PROJECT H.O.M.E.

(Housing, Opportunities for
Employment, Medical Care,
Education)

empowers people to break the cycle of homelessness, address the structural causes of poverty, and attain their fullest potential as members of society. Our work is rooted in our conviction of the dignity of each person and our belief that all are entitled to decent, affordable housing and quality education, employment, and health care. We achieve this through street outreach; supportive housing; comprehensive services; community development; employment training and opportunities; adult and youth education; health care; environmental enhancement; and political advocacy.

RESIDENCES

1515 and 1523 Fairmount Avenue
Diamond Street Residences, 2826-29 Diamond St.

In Community, 1229 Chestnut St.

Kairos House, 1440 N. Broad St.

Kate's Place, 1929 Sansom St.

Rowan I, 2729-A W. Diamond St.

Rowan II, 1901 N. Judson St.

St. Columba, 4133 Chestnut St.

St. Elizabeth's Recovery, 1850 N. Croskey St.

Women of Change, 21st & Arch Sts.

SUPPORT SERVICES & PROGRAMS

Adult Education, Employment & Arts
Community Development Corporation
Education and Advocacy
Honickman Learning Center and
Comcast Technology Labs
Outreach Coordination Center
Volunteer Program

BUSINESSES

Our Daily Threads, 215-232-6322
Back Home Café, 215-232-6311
H.O.M.E. Page Café, 215-320-6191

ADMINISTRATION

215-232-7272

HOMELESS OUTREACH HOTLINE

215-232-1984

HUMAN RESOURCES HOTLINE

215-232-7219 x5200

www.projecthome.org

COMMON GROUND DEDICATION

Thursday, June 4, 4:30 p.m.
St. Elizabeth's Community Center

JOIN US FOR THE dedication of *Common Ground*, a public art project created for the St. Elizabeth's Community Center by artists John Stone and Lonnie Graham and commissioned by the Fairmount Park Art Association. The project will create a new outdoor neighborhood meeting space on the footprint of the former sanctuary of St. Elizabeth's Church. Visit the Art Association's website (www.fpaa.org) for more information.

NEW PROJECT H.O.M.E. VIDEO



You can view our new informational video at www.projecthome.org. Produced by **SBK Productions**, this video was made possible by the generosity of **Bill**

Cunningham, former player and coach of the Philadelphia 76ers and longtime supporter of our work.

H.O.M.E.

page café

Parkway Central
1901 Vine Street

This innovative partnership between the Free Library of Philadelphia and Project H.O.M.E. provides jobs in a lovely and comfortable setting with wireless internet.

- Freshly brewed Starbucks coffee
- Baked goods from Metropolitan Bakery
- Sandwiches and salads from the Back Home Café
- And now featuring Del Frisco's Double Eagle Steak House's famous lemon cupcakes

M-F, 9:00 - 5:00, Sat. 9:00-4:00

215-320-6191

Are you a member of the **Project H.O.M.E. group on Facebook**? Receive advocacy alerts, events, and news related to our work! To get to our page, go to www.facebook.com and search for "Project H.O.M.E. Philadelphia."

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free, within Pennsylvania, (800) 732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.