

insideout

THE NEWSLETTER OF H.O.P.E. - HOMELESS OUTREACH PROVIDING ENCOURAGEMENT, LONGMONT, CO



Announcing Bikes for HOPE

Christina Kay, program manager

through donated goods and labor: Rick Emerson from Bike-n-Hike and Paul Andersen from Long Mont Velo. ACE Hardware in Longmont also provided a generous donation to the program and Seagate Technology is conducting a bike drive to assist with the program.

So far, 18 people experiencing homelessness in Longmont have received bikes through the program. One recipient needs his bike for transportation after a brain injury left him unsteady on his feet; another man is recovering from a drug addiction and uses his bike to get to his job at IHOP and to his probation appointments; and a young woman is using her bike to get safely to and from her new job at McDonald's, where she works late nights and early mornings.

If you would like to donate to this program, we are in need of men's and women's bicycles, bicycle accessories of all sorts, and monetary donations.

Thanks to a partnership between local businesses and cycling enthusiasts in our community, HOPE clients now have the opportunity to receive a free bicycle, accessories, and bike safety information. Bikes for HOPE is driven by HOPE volunteers and a crew of nine volunteer bike mechanics who are collecting donations of bicycles and bike parts and then refurbishing the bicycles. In the process, they also add important features like lights, bells and luggage racks so that each bicycle given to a HOPE client is reliable and safe.

This initiative is helping our clients meet a vital need for transportation, which is an empowering step towards self-sufficiency. Having a bike enables individuals to get themselves to work, appointments, interviews, etc, but the price of purchasing a bike can be prohibitive for someone who is not able to make ends meet.

We want to thank two local bike shop owners who are actively supporting this program

Extended Summer Hours at Evening Drop-In Center

In an effort to reduce strain on public facilities, the city of Longmont approached HOPE to provide day shelter services this summer. We responded by doubling the Evening Drop-In Center (EDIC) hours of operation on Mondays and Thursdays to 2pm – 8pm through the end of August. The EDIC typically operates from 6pm – 9pm in summer months to better serve people who are working during the day. Located in the Agape Family Services Annex, the EDIC switches to afternoon hours in winter to accommodate overnight emergency shelter services and to get people out of the cold earlier in the day.

The EDIC provides showers, laundry, snacks, coffee, and the opportunity to meet with HOPE's staff. It's an optimal time to get to know our clients' needs and find out how HOPE can make

...continued on page 3

TABLE OF CONTENTS	
Bikes for HOPE	1
Extended Hours	1
Letter From The Board President	2
Mission Statement	2
Volunteer Profile	2
Client Profile	3
Beer & Cheese Event	3
Events	4

Letter From the Board President

It is hard to believe that another year has flown by! As I reflect back on the past 12 months, I have seen HOPE grow in so many ways, with the transitional storage and the Step Up programs as the most recent additions to our services offering transformative opportunities for our clients. HOPE has emerged as a strong advocate in the community working with partner agencies to solve issues that impact the homeless community. Numerous articles in the Times Call featuring our good work help educate the public on misconceptions surrounding homelessness, and invariably lead to new volunteers and donors who were not aware of our mission.

In May of this year, the board of directors elected new officers; Susie Sisson, President; Tim Olsen, Vice President; Susie Hajek, Treasurer; Carlos Descalzo, Secretary. We said farewell to retiring member Joe Donahue; Laverne Reynolds and Nancy Hyde resigned due to family commitments. The board is very blessed to welcome seven new members, who come with a wide range of knowledge and deep passion to make a difference for HOPE and our clients. Please join me in thanking Kris Fitzgerald, Anna Gravelle, Annette Higgins, Kyle Himmerick, Janet Howe, Eric Jepsen and Brian Mathwich for their service. HOPE's board of directors is now comprised of 13 members.

The board and staff have put much thought into the decision to introduce a new service this winter. To address an unmet need, we are partnering with Agape Family Services to ensure adequate cold weather sheltering options for the 2016-2017 season. Unless a single site can be secured to accommodate all clients in a single location, the proposed model is two-tiered: HOPE provides emergency warming center (EWC) services for walk-in clients and Agape provides a 'safe haven' for up to 25 pre-screened individuals November – March, with additional weather-activated dates as needed. Sites for the EWC are the Journey (M-TH) and Heart of Longmont Churches (F-SS). We are projecting serving 350 individuals for sheltering, and will hire people experiencing homelessness as seasonal staff offering consistent employment toward stability.

Once again, I want to thank our volunteers and financial donors. You DO make a difference and we, the board of directors, appreciate all that you do to make HOPE run smoothly.

As always,

Susie

Susie Sisson
Board President

VOLUNTEER PROFILE:

Scott & Ruth Ann Sullivan

In each newsletter, we feature some of our wonderful volunteers.



Please meet Scott and Ruth Ann Sullivan. Scott is a street outreach volunteer. Ruth Ann and their two daughters, Kaitlyn and Brynne, are soup angel volunteers. Scott has also coordinated the last two HOPE water drives and done a swim-a-thon fundraiser for HOPE to raise money to purchase water.

Why they got involved: "We volunteered for many seasons with The Salvation Army to perform Bell Ringing locally. We found there was a void as this volunteering in our community was limited to only a few months of the year and quickly realized that homelessness and community service required a year-round commitment. In the Longmont Times-Call, we found an ad to volunteer. I called the number and spoke with Michele McCracken (former HOPE volunteer manager). We signed the girls up for Soup Angels and myself for street outreach. After the first night of street outreach and making meals for Soup Angels we were hooked."

What they like about volunteering with HOPE: "Stepping out of our comfort zone. I was one of those individuals who looked down upon the homeless and would shun them for panhandling with common afterthoughts of "get a job". I realized my first night on street outreach that there is much more to homelessness (bad luck, addiction, mental health) than I first thought and realized that I, too, could be a few paychecks from where they are."

I like the fact that you can spare a few hours out of your busy life to give back. It's not much to ask and the rewards are making a difference in the community by volunteering your time.

Volunteering has brought our family together. We, as parents, have to set an example for our kids to be kind, giving, and compassionate to those less fortunate. We strive to teach them not to judge. HOPE has changed my life and the lives of my wife and children and for that I am thankful. The girls help organize canned food and sock drives at their schools and despite our 9-5 jobs, Ruth Ann and I rally to find the time to help. Everyone is busy but just a few hours are all it takes to make a difference. Our only wish is that our kids and their kids adopt the mentality that this community service must be a part of their lives. I think we have also met some great individuals with common outlooks on life through HOPE."

Closing words: "Through HOPE, we have found the value of 'doing' through community service. *Peniling it in on your calendar to volunteer is what it takes. Do whatever is needed and go for it. If we as a whole were able to donate a few hours/month it would make the world a much better place. I think the message is to be kind and compassionate to everyone. We have reaped the benefits of being involved with this organization and met so many wonderful people in the process it blows me away. We are blessed.*"

If you'd like to help Scott with this year's drive, please contact him at: scottandruthann@msn.com.

CLIENT PROFILE: The Affirmation Lady

Alice Sueltenfuss, client services

Phyllis believes whole-heartedly in, and lives by, positive affirmations. Though she has many things to be sad or down about, Phyllis refuses to live life being down. She says there is so much to be thankful for. Focus on the positive and you will change your thoughts and your life, Phyllis would say. After the death of her husband while living in Louisiana, around the time of Hurricane Katrina, Phyllis set out to join her son in Colorado.

“ I am wonderfully blessed, highly favored, and deeply loved by God. ”

Phyllis lives in her car, moving it regularly from one location to another to avoid issues and confrontations with store employees. Her car has had many problems: engine trouble, flat tires, ignition problems, and the time she got locked out of the car.

“ In my world, all is whole, perfect, and complete. ”

Some days her diabetes bothers her, precious belongings get stolen, and the sleeping bag is just not warm enough during those cold winter nights.

“ I might not have everything I want, but I have everything I need. ”

While helping out in the kitchen at the HOPE Evening Drop-In Center one night, we commented to Phyllis that she was working so hard cleaning the counters, washing dishes, and mopping the floor. This woman is not afraid of hard work or elbow grease. She took a moment and then replied, “I don’t have my own kitchen, so it feels good to be in one, cook in one, and even clean one.”

“ I am victorious. I am successful. I am grateful. ”

Phyllis, being a mom, is also the street mom to many. She gives people rides to appointments, shelters, and to work. Phyllis and her no-nonsense, tell it like it is attitude, is appreciated by everyone who lives on the streets. The Evening Drop-In Center staff value her assistance with getting people moving to fold their laundry, take their turn for a shower, and follow the rules.

“ I am well liked. I am more than a conqueror. I am going to make it. ”

...continued from page 1

a small or large difference in their lives. One young man just needed a water cooler for day labor while working in the extreme heat. Another person needed a thick pair of socks. We can do a vulnerability index survey on those interested in housing, offer referrals and address barriers toward steady employment. When we are only open from 6pm-9pm, we struggle just to keep up with the volume of those needing showers - the extended hours gave us time to get to know some of the real needs of our guests.

HOPE’s new peer navigator works with EDIC guests on health issues, specifically COPD, cancer, heart disease, and diabetes. In one week we helped get vitamins to someone with a deficiency, delivered someone sick to a safe location at the end of the night, and soaked a tender foot hurt by thorns from work that day.

Whether it is case management, health care assistance, or showers and laundry, what we really provide is community. And with community, we build relationships. The conversation around the kitchen table was always friendly, but now it is helpful. People working day labor or working for a private firm are giving work advice to others. They are also giving them job locations where there is real work to do and money to make. Others are sitting outside around a fire pit, if it’s not too hot, getting to know people who are new to homelessness and giving them advice about where to eat and where to stay. One individual said, “I am grateful to HOPE for the Drop-In Center, that we have a place to come; the whole thing, but mostly, the fellowship.”

Beer & Cheese Pairing Event

HOPE’s summer kick-off Beer & Cheese pairing event on June 21st was a huge success! More than 100 guests enjoyed four signature pairings of Haystack Mountain cheese and Wibby Brewing beer while enjoying the soul-tugging sounds of Willie Bean & the Bluegrass Rangers. Repeatedly-heard comments included, “I didn’t know cheese and beer tasted this good together,” “Gosh, this is awesome fun,” and “When is the next tasting event?” Thank you to everyone who attended and helped raise \$1,000 in support of our services.



If you’d like to help or want to know more, we’d like to hear from you!

Lisa Searchinger, Executive Director

Susie Sisson, Board President

720-494-4673

www.hopeforlongmont.org

P.O. Box 756,
Longmont, CO 80502

HOPE is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit organization

Our Donation Acceptance Policy

We primarily are in need of men’s outdoor-type clothing. We cannot accept donations of children’s clothing, appliances, or furniture. Thank you for your understanding.

Donations accepted at:

HOPE, 804 S. Lincoln St., Longmont, CO

To arrange a donation time, please call HOPE at: **720-494-4673**

or email us at: info@hopeforlongmont.org



HOMELESS OUTREACH
PROVIDING ENCOURAGEMENT

P.O. Box 756
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SAVE THE DATE!

**On December 6th Your
Donation Goes Further!**



We hope you will think of us on Colorado Gives Day. This 24-hour movement happens on December 6, 2016, and is a chance to increase the value of your donation, thanks to the \$1 Million Incentive Fund.

Thanks!

Sending huge thank yous to everyone who supported Celebrate HOPE 2016!

It was a fantastic night which raised much-needed funds for our life-sustaining services.

Thanks to the generous support of our sponsors, businesses and donors, \$85,000 will go directly to serving the most vulnerable members of our community.

Endless gratitude to Shupe Homestead for hosting us and to our event sponsors for making this special night possible: Cox Automotive, Stapp Interstate Toyota, Sun Construction and Guaranty Bank.

