

## Become a Shalom Sustaining Supporter!

Shalom could not accomplish all that we do by ourselves. We rely heavily on financial support from individuals such as you. Why not consider becoming a monthly donor\* and help provide Shalom with a steady and reliable stream of income that allows us to plan for a sustainable future.

For as little as \$8/month, you can increase the power of your gift and put more of your dollars into Shalom programs such as Friend's House, Rapid Rehousing, guest daily personal services, Hunger Relief, effective case management, and so much more.

**Contact Dorothy Granger at (812) 334-5734 to discuss ways to increase the power of your gift.**

You may also make a gift with your credit card, online at: [shalomcommunitycenter.org](http://shalomcommunitycenter.org).

or mail a check to: Shalom Community Center  
PO Box 451  
Bloomington, IN 47402-0451

*\*Please note that automatic, ongoing monthly contributions can change or stop at any time that you say.*

## Shalom—For All Who Seek Home

### Our Mission

The Shalom Community Center is a 501(c)(3) dedicated to aiding and empowering people experiencing homelessness and poverty. As a resource center for people who are living in poverty and experiencing its ultimate expressions, Shalom provides day and overnight shelter, hunger relief, life essentials, case management, street outreach, housing support, including rapid re-housing and permanent supportive housing, employment assistance, and access to many government and social service agencies.

### Our Vision

Shalom Community Center envisions a community that honors every person's fundamental right to sustenance, a safe home, quality health care, and meaningful work.

### To Contact Us:

PO Box 451  
Bloomington, IN 47402-0451  
(812) 334-5728  
[shalom@shalomcommunitycenter.org](mailto:shalom@shalomcommunitycenter.org)  
[www.shalomcommunitycenter.org](http://www.shalomcommunitycenter.org)



On the Front Lines of Hunger and Homelessness

# DIGNITY

The Newsletter of Shalom Community Center

Summer 2017

## A Story of Success—Karen Jessie

Without Shalom I would still be out on the streets. I'd still be living on my food stamps. I'd still be squatting woods to woods or couch to couch... taking baths in ponds or creek, sometimes having to drink pond water.

There was no hope. There was just nothing. There was no way for me to get up on my feet without other people helping me and guiding me to start to learn how to live like a "normal" society person, to be able to get my feet grounded.

Out there on the streets [I felt like] I was crossing a creek of stones and I didn't have a

stone to step on and if I took that step I was going to drown again... With Shalom's support, I was able to take that step and grab a hold of that stone with my foot and they helped me get my balance. And I could step to the next stone and I made my way across that creek. And I now have a job. I have a home. I have a cat. I have a boyfriend. I have peace. I have a life again. Six years later, I have a life.

Shalom is a place that keeps people alive where there's no hope for them left out on the streets... Shalom is a place that needs to be in every city. It saves people's lives.



Karen Jessie after her interview with StoryCorps works as Shalom's custodian

## Out on the Streets

I did something crazy.

I traveled to San Francisco to the Tenderloin, part of the city known for its poverty, and lived on the streets for a week.

I joined six other people to take part in a street retreat, with the goal of bearing witness to all that was around us and more importantly, our own response to all that we witnessed and experienced—fear, joy, exhaustion, anger, kindness, grief, all of it.

I think it's important to mention that what I did was not homelessness. I've never been homeless and hopefully never will be. The trip was a gift of my own privilege, and without proper intent, could have been some strange form of adventure voyeurism.

Instead, it was an opportunity for personal transformation.

I, of course, learned a lot.

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Rev. Forrest Gilmore  
Pictured on his street retreat in  
San Francisco's  
Tenderloin district



## Brain Injury in People Experiencing Homelessness

Brain injury is often considered the “invisible disability.” Unless it affects a person’s ability to move or to speak, most people “look fine” after their brain injury. People are often diagnosed with a concussion or maybe don’t even seek medical attention after an injury, not realizing they have experienced an actual brain injury.

So what is a brain injury and how do you know if you have had one? A brain injury is any event that has caused some level of physical and physiological damage to the brain tissue to a degree that it alters consciousness, even just briefly (feeling dazed, having brief memory loss, or brief or extended unconsciousness). The damage can be in the form of death of brain cells or the ripping apart of some of the connections between the brain cells. Our brains operate by passing messages from one brain cell to the next, so if any of those connections are broken our brain cannot work as smoothly and as quickly.

One category of brain injury is “traumatic brain injury,” caused by an external force such as a car or bike crash, a fall, a blow to the head (accidental or from an assault), repeated shaking of the head/neck (e.g. shaken baby syndrome, which can also happen to kids and adults), and blast injuries.

Another category includes all those injuries that are NOT related to an outside force—stroke, a loss of oxygen from drowning, heart attack, drug overdose, a disease such as meningitis or multiple sclerosis, electrocution, a brain tumor, or exposure to a toxic chemical such as lead, some drugs, or industrial chemicals.

Whatever the cause of the brain injury, the effects can be profound. Thinking can be affected, leaving a person with problems concentrat-



**Social Worker, Jean Capler**

ing, staying on topic, remembering information (conversations, appointments, or learning new tasks), following directions, finding the right words to express ourselves, or understanding what we are told or read.

It can make a person more impulsive, making poor decisions, feeling more irritable and having a harder time controlling their temper. Depression and anxiety are also very common after a brain injury. Sometimes people with brain injuries might blurt out something that might be inappropriate. People often will experience frequent headaches, fatigue, or light sensitivity. After a brain injury, people are also more likely to develop seizures. Balance and coordination problems are also common.

If you or someone you love has been diagnosed with a brain injury or concussion, or you suspect a brain injury, you can find more information at [biausa.org](http://biausa.org), [brainline.org](http://brainline.org), or [strokeassociation.org](http://strokeassociation.org).

*By Jean Capler, Licensed Social Worker*

(Next issue, Part 2: Brain Injury, Homelessness & Moving Forward)

## Out on the Streets (cont. from pg. 1)

I learned what it’s like to not have access to a bathroom. One day, I spent more than an hour walking to find an open and working bathroom. I eventually had to rely on the kindness of a church to deal with this essential and sometimes urgent need that we all share.

I learned how important names are. The whole week only one person both asked and called me by name. I was startled by how caring that felt.

**“We discover on the streets our common humanity.”**

- Faithful Fools Street Ministry

I also learned again how important it is simply to bear witness without judgment, without fear: the teenage boys dealing crack in front of a butterfly mural that read, “Be the change you want to see in the world,” an aimless, older woman, walking around wearing a ragged winter coat on an 85° day, the human urine running down the sidewalk from a fire alarm pole, the older man who offered me strawberries, calling them cherries, a mentally ill woman screaming in agony.

It is in that witnessing that something else emerged: an immediate awareness of our connections. The retreat reminded me that, before judgments or programs or solutions or anything, it’s essential to remember that our common humanity must always come first.

***Shalom will offer a one-day “street retreat,” for our community, this summer. Keep your eyes open for additional information.***

## IN MEMORY PHIL SAUNDERS



Phil at the 2016 Nancy Saunders Almost Awesome Tennis Tournament

It is a group of dedicated, wonderful volunteers that keep the day-to-day running of Shalom on an even keel. W. Phillip Saunders was one such volunteer. It is with incredible sadness we note that Phil Saunders has died. He passed away on 5/27/2017 surrounded by the love of his remarkable family.

Phil was Professor Emeritus in the Economics Department at IU and since retiring, Phil spent more time enjoying his family (including five children and 10 plus two “bonus” grandchildren) as well as volunteering at Shalom and the Food Pantry among many other activities. In April 2012 he was aptly presented with a Be More Award by the

Bloomington Volunteer Network, “for his passion and commitment to people in poverty.”

He was an active member of the First United Methodist Church, an avid golfer, and a great friend to many. Phil had the greatest passion for and commitment to Shalom — bar none. He was an example of the importance of giving to those who are in need and serving through deeds and not words. He was an icon of persistence, dedication, and hope for the mission of Shalom since its earliest days. He is absolutely irreplaceable. There are just, of course, no words sufficient to honor him.

His passing reminds us that there is *never enough time*.

## Saving Society with the Sun

Shalom cares about people AND the environment and now we get to do BOTH at the same time.

With half of our utility costs dedicated to electricity, we decided that “going solar” is one way to make the organization both more friendly to the environment and more impactful with people in need. The less we spend on utilities, the more we have for direct ways to help.

With solar, we will cut our electric costs by a third to a half, saving us thousands of dollars every year.

If you are passionate about solar and passionate about Shalom, please consider sponsoring a solar panel with a gift of \$650! Or two for \$1300!! Your support has gotten us to where we are today and we are so grateful.

## Our thanks to YOU for Hunger Relief

This year, almost 100 generous individuals raised over \$34,000 for hunger relief.

March and April are the months we focus on hunger relief to help build a base for the meals we provide throughout the year. Since Shalom provided nearly 75,000 meals last year, having a well-stocked pantry is very important to our kitchen and the guests we serve.

Shalom spends your gifts wisely and manages them well so that we get the most we can from your generosity. We can often provide healthy meals at a thrifty \$1.00/meal/guest.

THANK YOU!!

## Ten Gifts You Can Give to Support Our Guests

10. Laundry Soap
9. Toilet Paper
8. Tents
7. Diapers, Sizes 3-5
6. Coffee
5. Razors
4. Sneakers & Flip flops
3. Backpacks
2. Deodorant
1. Rain gear (umbrellas, rain coats, ponchos, tarps)

*To make a monetary donation, see the information on the page 4.*