

Would YOU Become a Monthly Donor?

WHAT YOUR \$8.00 MONTHLY GIFT CAN PROVIDE:	WHAT YOUR \$10.00 MONTHLY GIFT CAN PROVIDE:	WHAT YOUR \$50 MONTHLY GIFT CAN PROVIDE:	WHAT YOUR \$200 MONTHLY GIFT CAN PROVIDE:
eight meals for our guests	ten meals for our guests	50 meals for our guests	200 meals for our guests
-or-	-or-	-or-	-or-
a combination lock for a guest staying at A Friend's Place emer- gency shelter	a copy of a birth certi- ficate for someone with- out ID	one month utilities for a newly-housed family	two weeks of emergen- cy shelter for one adult
-or-	-or-	-or-	-or-
bus tickets for a week's worth of trips to work	a prescription for a much needed medicine	four nights of emer- gency shelter for one adult	annual health care premiums for 15 people

When you become a monthly donor, your gift is combined with other monthly gifts to 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 A Friend's Place, Rapid Re-Housing, guest daily personal services, Hunger Relief, effective case management, and so much more.

Contact Dorothy Granger at (812) 334-5734 x123
to discuss ways to increase the power of your gift.

You may also make a gift online with your credit card at: www.shalomcommunitycenter.org. or
mail a check to: Shalom Community Center, PO Box 451, Bloomington, IN 47402-0451.

Please note that monthly contributions can be changed or stopped at any time.

Shalom—For All Who Seek Home

Our Mission

Shalom Community Center is a 501(c)(3) dedicat-
ed to aiding and empowering people experiencing
homelessness and poverty. As a home away from
home 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, employ-
ment 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 451/620 S Walnut St
Bloomington, IN 47402-0451
(812) 334-5734
shalom@shalomcommunitycenter.org
www.shalomcommunitycenter.org



On the Front Lines of Hunger and Homelessness

DIGNITY

The Newsletter of Shalom Community Center

Winter 2020

After the Fire

He came back to his camp to see it on fire. Living outside exposes people to many threats, but to see all that he had go literally up in flames was terrifying.

Thomas was most worried about his cat, Crater, who he had left behind in his tent.

"[Crater is] is family... like one of my kids."

When the firefighters brought Crater to him unharmed, he said, "I was happy. I was crying. You can see it in the picture. That's what you call joy-

ful."

Thomas has been homeless for six years. A lifelong Hoosier, he was born at Fort Harrison to a military family and went to high school in Brown County.

He's had a rough life. Born with Rubella, he suffered severe hearing loss and learning disabilities. To this day, he is unable to read.

As a preteen, he was repeatedly molested by his babysitter and two family members.



Thomas "Crow" Blackburn with Crater
(With gratitude to Jeremy Hogan and The Bloomingtonian for the photo.)

(continued on page 2)

Twenty Years and Counting...



Rev. Forrest Gilmore,
Executive Director

I remember walking into Sha-
lom my very first day over ten
years ago. Recently hired as the
Assistant Director, it was Mar-
tin Luther King Day. Felt auspi-
cious.

But, I was nervous. I didn't
know what to do. I worried I
wouldn't fit in. I worried I
wouldn't know how to handle
whatever came up.

I remember meeting Abraham,
one of our guests and volun-
teers, sitting at the front desk.
Warm, friendly. He greeted me
and took me under his wing.

It was not long before I found
my way. Joel Rekas, the Exec-
utive Director at the time, told
me they usually knew how new
staff were going to do very
quickly. I still remember that
as we bring new staff on board
at Shalom.

On January 18, I celebrated
my tenth anniversary with
Shalom, with almost nine as
your Executive Director, fol-
lowing Joel's retirement.

When I walk into Shalom, I
don't feel nervous anymore.

But, I do feel other emotions.

Save the Date

Hunger Relief Campaign
February and March

Supporter Celebration and Annual Meeting

April 2, 5:15-7:00pm at Upland Brewpub

2nd annual Solidarity Sleepout to Benefit A Friend's Place Shelter

May 1-2 (look for registration details online and in the mail)

10th Anniversary of the move to 620 S Walnut St
August 2nd, 5pm at Shalom Day Center

3rd annual Fireside Gala
Late October (look for ticket details online and in the mail)

After the Fire (cont. from page one)

He's been receiving Social Security disability benefits since he was 15 years old. Diagnosed with severe mental illness and suicidal ideation, he was hospitalized in his teens.

His struggles led to time in prison and he's been homeless ever since his release.

Despite continuing to struggle with homelessness, Shalom's services have meant a great deal to him.

"[Shalom] changed my attitude about life... I got a place where I can eat..., take a shower, do laundry... It's helped me be a better person. I have new friends. [Shalom] is family."

When asked about his dreams for the future, he hopes for "a

home for me and [my girlfriend], and hot meals every night. Watch TV together and lay on the couch together. I want to marry her."

The outpouring of support to Thomas following the fire has been tremendous. Shalom helped him with a new sleeping bag and Centerstone helped him with a tent. The community rallied to help him with a hotel room, food for Crater, and a new pair of boots.

Our next step is get him back home again.

With parting words, he said, "The people [at Shalom] are good people... good hearts and good spirits... They're angels in the skies."

Twenty Years and Counting (cont. from page one)

Sometimes, it's hurt... the hurt of too many guests struggling with hunger, homelessness, and assaults on their dignity.

Sometimes, it's joy... the celebration of a key to a new home... or a group laugh.

Sometimes, it's anger... the anger of a person who has been pushed to the edge.

Sometimes, it's compassion... the generosity of a person struggling with so much who offers to sweep up a mess or hold the head of someone having a seizure... the kindness of a volunteer preparing a meal, offering a gentle word, or handing someone a toothbrush.

So often, it's gratitude... the gratitude of this sacred ground and the lineage of supporters who have made it holy, accom-

panying so many people through the greatest struggles.

Always, it's pride... I'm proud to be a part of this amazing organization, which every day stands on the frontlines of poverty, offering compassion, dignity, support, and solutions to people who need us most.

On January 24, less than a week after my tenth year, Shalom celebrated its twentieth anniversary. I am reminded of that little room in the First United Methodist Church where Shalom started, serving coffee and donuts and providing phones and the newspaper.

Shalom began with a spark... a concern of compassion. Recognizing many people without homes had no place to go, so many people came together,

including the our first President, the ever so tenacious Shirley St. John, to create this great service.

Having grown from that small room and one part-time employee to three centers of operation, thirty employees, and 1,600 volunteers a year, providing 80,000 meals, 14,000 shelter nights, and housing for hundreds could only be accomplished from the work of those brave souls who opened our doors that very first time.

We stand today on the foundation of giants.

And that same spark of compassion runs through us.

I am filled with gratitude.

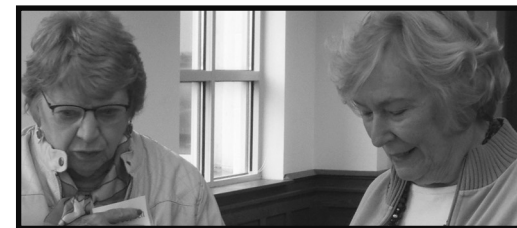
I am in awe of what we have yet to accomplish together.

Twenty Years of Life-Changing Results

What started out as a room in the First United Methodist Church, where guests could get coffee and read the paper, has grown to an expansive resource of services and solutions for people experiencing hunger, homelessness, and extreme poverty.

Shalom Community Center is the area's results-based organization providing needed services to help move people out of homelessness into homes of their own. Did you know Shalom operates a day shelter, seven days a week; the only non-religious overnight shelter in the area, A Friend's Place; Crawford Homes and Johnson Homes that provide permanent, supportive housing to those who are chronically homeless with a disability; Rapid Re-Housing that prioritizes those living on the street and gets them into their own apartments? Your support over the past 20 years made all this possible!

A handful of faces of supporters of 20 years of Shalom...



Above: Forrest Gilmore, ED of Shalom introduces past presidents of Shalom Community Center board, from L Dan Lodge-Rigal, Patty Andrews, Jim Harvey, Karen Boswell, Dick Rose, Ross Martinie-Eiler (current Pres.), Jane Martin, (Forrest Gilmore), Joe Emerson, and representing Shirley St. John (who passed away late in 2019), is her husband, Wendell St. John.



If you couldn't make it to the 20th anniversary celebration, please try and attend our annual supporter meeting on Thursday, April 2nd from 5:15PM -7PM, at the Upland Brewpub Banquet Hall.

Space is limited so *please* RSVP to dorothy@shalomcommunitycenter.org