



## Happy 2010 Everyone!!



Isn't it great on New Year's Day to think of all the wonderful things that are going to happen in the coming year – babies that are about to be born, couples about to be married, and beautiful sights we will see as we travel. On that first day we can look forward to the New Year being full of only good memories.

But soon our busy daily lives invade, and then we see pictures of terrible disasters such as the earthquake in Haiti. At Ruth Meiers Hospitality House it would be easy for us to get bogged down from the bleak things we hear on a daily basis about people who are homeless or are at risk of being homeless. Instead, we choose to give these people hope and encouragement as they move toward doing what they need to do to get out of the situation they are in.

Ruth Meiers Hospitality House was very busy in 2009. The following is a quick year in review:

- We provided shelter to 118 more individuals in 2009 than in 2008 – 1,685 more nights of lodging
- The Stone Soup Kitchen served 6,705 meals
- The Single Point of Entry had 264 households make 365 visits to the program

- The Drop In Center provided 900 nights of lodging
- The Baby Boutique had 99 mothers make 262 visits to the Boutique
- We gave out 448 food baskets to people in the community who did not have enough food at home

In the upcoming months, the all-volunteer Ruth Meiers Board of Directors will spend time in a strategic planning session so that we can be prepared for what may come our way. The Board and staff are committed to working as hard as we always have to continue to provide services to the needy in our community. Although the economy has also affected our funding, we stay positive, knowing that the generous Ruth Meiers donors will continue to support our programs.

As Ruth Meiers Hospitality House has said over the last 23 years, "Every Heart Needs a Home," and together we can provide that home to our family, friends and neighbors who need our help.

Thank you for everything that you do for Ruth Meiers and for all the support you have given over the years. We are looking forward to a wonderful 2010.

Sincerely,

*Susan Martin*

Susan Martin  
Executive Director

## Stone Soup Kitchen Goes Green

### Julie Huwe, Soup Kitchen Coordinator

In an effort to save the planet, and by default, some of your generously donated dollars, the Stone Soup Kitchen is going green! I recently went with a friend to the landfill to dispose of a couch. What I saw was very disturbing. Plastic was everywhere! After doing some research, I discovered that Styrofoam cups last over one million years in the landfill. Plastic forks, knives and spoons will be around for 1000 plus years. This is a small step for the planet, but a big step for Ruth Meiers.

If you would like to help us in this "green" quest, the Stone Soup Kitchen will need: used or new (reusable, not disposable) plates,

bowls, silverware, coffee cups and drinking cups. Lightweight items would be best, but anything would be gratefully accepted. Please bring the items to 1800 East Broadway Avenue, any time between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. Please call Julie at 222-2108, ext. 103, or e-mail her at [jhuwe@rmhh.org](mailto:jhuwe@rmhh.org).



# From the – A Christmas Challenge!



Ruth Meiers Hospitality House is blessed with the generosity of most of our local parishes, churches, congregations, synagogues, and places of worship. This partnership is a good fit – enabling these neighbors to help their neighbors. While our staff, Board of Directors, and the clients we serve are very thank-

ful for the generosity of our entire community, we would like to share a particularly inspiring story, a Christmas Challenge, which we learned about right after the New Year.

Although 2009 was a challenge to meet our financial budget, we continued to pursue our passion...working hard, staying positive, and keeping faith that additional funding would come our way soon. Then, on a cold January afternoon, Pastor Kermit Culver, of Legacy United Methodist Church (formerly known as First United Methodist Church) stopped by to visit Susan Martin, our Executive Director. Pastor Kermit explained that back in November, he had challenged his congregation to have “half a Christmas” for 2009. He asked families to calculate how much they spent on their 2008 Christmas...and to honor the true spirit

of the season by donating the other half they would have spent on Christmas to charity. He challenged them to make others a priority and reminded them it was not THEIR birthday they were preparing to celebrate.

The Challenge? To come together in this mission and raise \$25,000 to benefit Ruth Meiers Hospitality House. Ruth Meiers was chosen as a benefactor because of the wide variety of programs we offer to shelter the homeless, feed the hungry, and to serve our neighbors who need emergency assistance through our Single Point of Entry.

On January 10, 2010, Sue Martin, Executive Director, and Kelly Gunsch, Director of Development attended both Sunday services at Legacy United Methodist Church to celebrate in the successful fundraising challenge. Sue and Kelly shared with everyone how their extraordinary efforts would be put to good use at Ruth Meiers. When Pastor Kermit announced the final total – \$27,700 – to the congregation, jaws dropped...friends and family looked at each other with surprise and pride. We could sense the legacy they were creating...for a mission with about 350 active families in our community, this was the true meaning of Christmas.

Homelessness has no set rules or status requisites – it could happen to any of us. Our friends at Legacy United Methodist Church should feel proud of how they have reached out to shelter the homeless and feed the hungry. As our partners, they are now part of the solution to solving these ever-present social problems.

## Journey from Homelessness to Hope



Every day, our Single Point of Entry staff assists individuals and families in our community when they are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. By collaborating with other helping agencies, emergency housing providers, churches and law enforcement, we are able to help those in need by coordinating their services and networking to move people off the streets and into affordable housing.

Jaime, our Single Point of Entry Coordinator, received a call from a staff with another agency. They had a disabled mother with four children who had nowhere to go and desperately needed assistance. When Susan arrived in Jaime's office, her four children were full of energy and smiles! We learned that Susan and her children had been staying at the Ronald McDonald House while her youngest daughter, who was only 3 years old, received cancer treatments here in Bismarck. The previous year, the little girl had a tumor removed from behind her eye, and now the cancer had come back. The family had already exhausted their money traveling back and forth from a small town in western North Dakota for the treatments on that tumor. When Susan found out that

her little girl would need cancer treatments for another year, she began searching for a wheelchair accessible home in Bismarck/Mandan and applied for housing assistance.

Unfortunately, families can only stay at the Ronald McDonald House for one additional night after their family member is released from the hospital – and our Ruth Meier's women and children's emergency shelter was filled. After many phone calls to various agencies and cancer treatment centers, Jaime successfully coordinated temporary housing for this mother and her children – and gave Susan enough food and diapers to get her family through the next few days. Through it all, this mother had the patience of an angel – Susan's determination brought tears to my eyes...she had so much hope in the midst of so many exhausting obstacles. Jaime and Susan worked together diligently for three days to find a home. At last, an opportunity came through and Jaime helped Susan with a security deposit on a mobile home! Jaime then helped the family furnish their home with some basic things from the furniture barn at Ruth Meiers Hospitality House. While their struggle is not over, Susan's disability income will cover rent. Susan's family is at peace with a home of their own, as self-sufficient as possible in the midst of helping her little girl conquer cancer. We are so blessed to be a part of this family's recovery and with your partnership, we can continue to make a difference to Susan and many more families who simply need a helping hand.

## Volunteer Team Needed to Coordinate our Annual Taco Sale

Ruth Meiers Hospitality House has made the best Indian Tacos at the street fair for many years – it's become a tradition for many of us to stop at the Ruth Meiers taco stand every September. It's a small way each one of us can make a contribution to benefit our hungry and homeless neighbors helped by the House. We are, however, searching for a volunteer team of 8-10 individuals who is willing to operate the Taco Sale for us.

Like many non-profits who are tightening their belts, we too have to decide what projects to focus on and what fundraisers will give us the best income for our time and efforts. Every year, the week before and the week of our Taco Sale, we are not able to provide some of our services to the homeless that are staying with us because most staff are needed to prepare supplies, cook taco meat, confirm volunteer spots are filled, etc. In addition, our office itself closes Thursday and Friday of taco sale week to set up our tent and equipment, coordinate our volunteer groups, and overall, to work wherever needed – pulling bread, frying bread, making change runs to the bank, and more. Our clients lose out because we are not able to provide basic services during this time – plus with all the staff time put into this event we do not really come out ahead on our costs.

The Ruth Meiers Board of Directors feels that the people we serve need to come first. They have asked us to search for a

team to take over the Taco Sale. We would furnish our equipment, train your team, provide to-do lists and even purchase the supplies...you would furnish the manpower.

Ruth Meiers is so lucky to have several groups which volunteer annually at our Taco Sale

and we certainly would never be able to operate a fundraiser of this size without these amazing volunteer teams! Is there a service group or business that is willing to coordinate and run the annual Taco Sale for Ruth Meiers Hospitality House? Knowing there is a waiting list of groups to participate in our Stone Soup Kitchen, we're pretty sure there is! Please contact Kelly or Sue at 222-2108, or stop by our office, 1800 E. Broadway Avenue, for additional information.



## Herberger's Community Day 2010

Individuals and groups are needed to sell coupon booklets for the upcoming Herberger's Community Day Event. It's as simple as ABC:

- A. Herberger's provides the coupons and marketing for the one day sale event, February 27, 2010.
- B. Booklets sell for \$5 and Ruth Meiers Hospitality House will retain the entire \$5 for each coupon booklet sold! If we sell 100 booklets, our organization raises \$500 – it's that easy!
- C. Each booklet contains a \$10 coupon good on almost any item of \$10 or more, plus additional coupons for 20% all-day savings, a 30% early bird savings coupon, and exclusive bonus offers.

Please contact Kelly at 222-2108 or by email, [kellyg@rmhh.org](mailto:kellyg@rmhh.org) to volunteer today.

*"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."*

~ Margaret Mead



## Together, we can make a difference!

[www.rmhh.org](http://www.rmhh.org)

*visit today to see how we are changing lives...*

Will you consider a generous gift as partnership in our efforts? We pledge to work with you to provide food and shelter to our less fortunate friends and neighbors in our community. If you would prefer to donate online, please visit our website [www.rmhh.org](http://www.rmhh.org). Click on the "donate now" button and make an immediate contribution with your Visa or Mastercard. Our website link is secure and your personal information will be safe, never sold or exchanged. Thank you for your generosity – together, we can help men, women, and children find a new beginning.

**Every ♥ Needs a Home.  
Join us on Facebook.**

Support our mission to end homelessness and hunger... find us on Facebook and stay up-to-date on events, fundraisers, and simple ways you can make a BIG difference to your homeless and hungry neighbors served by Ruth Meiers Hospitality House.

**Ruth Meiers Hospitality House is Celebrating 23 Years of Improving the Lives of the Men, Women and Children in Our Community.**

**Please Include Us In Your Charitable Giving!**

When you give to Ruth Meiers Hospitality House, your gift means the hungry will be fed, the homeless will have a place to live, and the uninsured and under-insured will receive essential medical care. Your tax deductible gift changes lives and creates brighter futures for the many less fortunate in our community.



**How do I give?**

- You can simply make a check out to Ruth Meiers Hospitality House and send it in the enclosed envelope.
- We accept credit cards.
- We accept memorials and bequests.
- You can give through work by having it taken out of your payroll. Ask if your employer offers employee matching gifts, that's another way to enhance your gift.
- You can donate through our website [www.rmhh.org](http://www.rmhh.org)

Please consider a gift of \$3,000, \_\_\_\_\_, \$2,000, \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000, \_\_\_\_\_, \$500, \_\_\_\_\_, \$400, \_\_\_\_\_ \$300, \_\_\_\_\_ \$200, \_\_\_\_\_, \$100 \_\_\_\_\_, Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_



[www.rmhh.org](http://www.rmhh.org)

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