



*every heart
needs a home*

HAPPY EASTER

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www.rmhh.org



Spring 2010

Dear friends,

With spring's arrival, many of us look forward to tending our garden or enjoying a walk or bike ride with friends... a few short months in which we enjoy the outdoors without worries of frostbite, ice or sub-zero wind-chill temperatures! As we rejoice in those little things the new season brings, we want to take a moment to thank you for your generous support of Ruth Meiers Hospitality House. We are so grateful for your year-long commitment to helping the homeless and hungry families we serve. By working together, every day we are making a difference in the lives of the men, women and children who need our help - so they may share in our optimism for the future and enjoy the beauty spring brings to our community.

We would like to share this heartwarming story about Deborah's transition to independence through the help of our women's emergency shelter and social work team.

If you have ever wondered whom you have helped, I am a mother. I am a grandmother. I am a service member's mother. I am a volunteer for many service organizations from the military to soup kitchens, to Habitat for Humanity, building homes for the homeless. I helped at cancer-cure events and the list goes on. I was a home-owner and a single mother who worked hard to provide well for my children. I am your neighbor. And yes, through life's challenges and turns, I became homeless.

It didn't event hit me until the friend I was staying with told me: "sweetie, YOU are homeless, going from friend to friend." I am fifty years young and had sold my home to supplement my income to raise my two daughters. After raising them into young adults with military careers, the economy in my community became awful. Entire shopping malls closed and jobs were scarce. In search of a new job opportunity and affordable rent, I found myself depending on my friends. I stayed a few days at a time with each person so as not to put a burden on them.



The list is long why friends and family can not help. If they receive any type of assistance, it could be taken away from them should they take in extra people to stay in their apartment. Times have changed and people closest to you aren't always able to take you in like in the old days-they may live too far away, enduring hard times themselves or simply be in a time and place where they are not able to take you in.

For so many, the word "shelter" has a stigma. During my stay at Ruth Meiers Hospitality House, I witnessed a young child hang her head in shame when she told her school friend they are staying "in a shelter." The look in those little eyes was awful, as if she had somehow done or said something wrong. I gently responded and explained to them that "We are staying in dorms, dear. We have areas for everyone and private sleeping areas, just like dorms." Suddenly, her eyes lit up and she was smiling and telling her friend that "Yes! My mom and I are staying in the dorms here until we find an apartment!"

The Ruth Meiers "dorms" was great during my transition in this part of my life.

In this negative below winter weather, this was a warm place with everything a household would have...with added help from social workers and other helping agencies to help get you back on your feet. Job Service even came directly to us and I

was ready with my resume! The Ruth Meiers “dorms” was so much more than a warm house with a bed for me. During this time in my life, in my fifties, looking for work became a full-time job of itself. The job competition is grand, but at least I didn’t have to worry any more about where I would sleep or get a hot meal. I received the support I needed to get back on my feet and into my own apartment again. I’ve discovered that homelessness does not discriminate on your faith, age, color, race, nationality or any type of college degree or training we may have.

If you have health care of any kind, a home to call your own – to host Sunday family dinners at, a car to drive through the snow or rain to get groceries and supplies, consider yourself very fortunate indeed. You have a piece of the American Dream! Hold on Tight!

In Peace and Prayer,

Deborah

* *Deborah’s name has been change to protect her privacy*

Will you please consider a generous gift that will help us to change lives and create brighter futures for friends such as Deborah? A gift of \$1,000 will provide 30 days of shelter and hope to a mother and her children. \$500 will help our shelter provide 20 days of lodging and supportive services to a homeless man or woman and give them a fresh start. Your gift of \$250 could help us provide 61 meals for the poor who eat lunch in our Stone Soup Kitchen. In 2009, Ruth Meiers Hospitality House provided 12,312 nights of lodging and assistance to men, women, and children without a place to call home. Together we can shelter the homeless, feed the hungry and provide essential services to those less fortunate neighbors in our community.

With thankfulness for your generosity,

Susan Martin

Susan Martin, Executive Director



Please accept my (our) partnership in the lives of the people you serve, giving them hope and a future.

\$3000___, \$2000___, \$1000___, \$500___, \$400___, \$300___, \$200___, \$100___, other \$_____

If you choose to donate online, please visit our website www.rmhh.org. Our website is secure and your personal information will be safe, never sold or exchanged.

Find Ruth Meiers Hospitality House on *facebook* and add our group to receive occasional updates on community benefits to help those in need. If you would like to host a fundraiser or food drive, please contact Kelly at 222-2108 (or email her at kellyg@rmhh.org) and we will happily add your event to our website and provide our logo, needs lists, etc. to help you promote and challenge your coworkers, friends and family!

