

**Front Royal Warren County
Shelter for the Homeless**

HOUSE OF HOPE



**Annual Report
2008/2009**

Table of Contents:

- Mission Statement and Executive Summary
- A Year of Increased Stability
- Programs and Services
- Partners
- Funding
- Board
- Financial Statement

Front Royal Warren County Shelter for the Homeless

HOUSE OF HOPE

722 Warren Avenue, Front Royal, VA

www.warrencountyhomeless.org

Telephone: (540) 635-2466

2008/2009 Annual Report

“Since I have been there (House of Hope), I have seen more acts of random kindness than I’ve witness my entire life. People need to express love and kindness to counter act the madness, and senseless pursuit of selfishness. People in general want to care, and the “House” gives them an opportunity to be humane. That in itself has affected me more than anything. I arrived bitter at the world, for what I perceived as an overall lack of compassion. I thought everyone was rude, greedy... but by God’s graces, my passion for life has been rekindled. And I once again believe that man can one day get it together, more importantly, I know that I can, so thank you House of Hope for renewing my faith in mankind.” D.W., currently employed at a laundry facility.

Mission Statement and Executive Summary:

House of Hope is a cooperative venture among elements of the Front Royal and Warren County community. Working together, state and local governments, community-based organizations, local businesses, Transitional Housing Project, area churches, Warren County Congregational Community Action Project (C-CAP), and concerned individuals serve the needs of the homeless in Front Royal and Warren County.

State Incorporation (SCC ID# 068178-3) and 501(c)3 Federal tax exempt status were granted as of August 9, 2007. (Federal Employer Identification # 26-0337513).

This report covers activities that took place during the fiscal year July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009. In November, 2008, we opened the Overnight Shelter at 724 Warren Avenue, next door to the House. ***During this period, we have served 105 men at both facilities.*** Some services were also provided to families, women and children in the community.

A Year of Increased Stability and Expansion Despite the Economic Downturn.

As a three-year-old organization, funded by monthly donations, and staffed by volunteers, House of Hope, at 722 Warren Avenue was blessed to spend the entire year in one location. This welcome stability enabled us to concentrate on improving our services and meeting the increased demand placed on us by the economic recession.

The “house” has a capacity to serve a maximum of eight men; six residents with two emergency beds. It is a zero-tolerance, alcohol- and drug-free 24-hour facility. Last year, the “house” overcame one major obstacle in achieving compliance with Town zoning regulations: Originally, it could not satisfy the minimum requirement of 11 parking spaces which would classify it as “boarding/lodging house.” Since there is nothing in the

Town Zoning Code defining a homeless shelter, boarding house is the closest acceptable designation.

The solution to our need for additional parking spaces, and the answer to the increased demand for services came from a vacant church, next door to the house, at 724 Warren Avenue. We were able to rent the church, adapt the interior, and provide a facility to serve the “chronically” homeless, a population that constitutes approximately 10% of the homeless population, but takes up 50% of community resources. It also includes Veterans.

Renovation of the church was a community effort. Habitat for Humanity framed the cubicles, some materials and services were donated, and much of the labor came from our own homeless men, many of whom had been employed in the building trades, an occupation that has been severely hit in our area by the recession.

On November 18, 2009, we opened the Overnight Shelter. It accommodates 16 men, two of whom function as resident Overnight Monitors. The Government defines “chronically homeless” as someone who has been homeless as many as three to four times in a 12-month period. Characteristically, these individuals may suffer from mental illness, substance abuse/addictions, lack of education, and/or a history of incarceration. Though the men were not permitted to drink or take drugs (other than prescription medication under supervision) on the premises, they were accepted if they were drinking or on drugs at the time of admission/or off the premises. Disruptive behavior was not permitted, and constituted cause for dismissal.

Our “Tolerance” policy ended in March 22, 2009 after multiple complaints from neighbors, about disruptive behavior at the shelter, and the growing realization that we were not helping the men by tolerating alcoholics and drug abusers. A community meeting was held including representatives from the Front Royal Police Department, Sheriff’s Office, neighbors, and community leaders. Consensus was reached that we could do more to help those who sincerely wanted help if we changed to **”Zero Tolerance”** for alcohol and drugs.

Since then attendance has fluctuated. However the Overnight Shelter has been filled to capacity about 75% of the time, sometimes requiring emergency floor mats. There have been no complaints by neighbors, contact with law enforcement has been minimal, and the men are thriving.

In January 2009 the Board of Directors decided to apply to United Way of Front Royal to become a member agency. That same month, our Executive Director resigned. Since then, the board President and Secretary have functioned as Co-Administrators, under the Board’s oversight . **On June 29, 2009, House of Hope was admitted to the family of United Way agencies.**

In 2008/2009 we also re-designed our website www.warrencountyhomeless.org, produced an attractive brochure, and have our own beautiful Logo.

House of Hope Programs and Services.

Referrals to House of Hope come from the Police Department, Front Royal jail, Sheriff's Office, Warren County Hospital, Northwestern Community Services, C-Cap, and individuals in the community. Prospective residents are screened before admission, and background checks take place within 24 hours. When we get our computer, background checks will be done at the time of admission.

House of Hope offers two programs:

- 1) A longer-term 24-hour program at the "house," 722 Warren Avenue with eight beds. In addition to a bed, clothing, food, bath and laundry facilities, case management and referral to relevant agencies for needed services are also provided. Whatever food is contributed by churches and individuals is shared by the House and Overnight Shelter. Residents assemble once a week for a general "House Meeting" and meet with the case worker once a week for follow-up. Also provided are counseling, mentoring and job search assistance, in short, anything needed to help the men become self-sufficient and get back on their feet.
- 2) A short-term overnight program from 5:30PM to 9:00AM daily, at 724 Warren Avenue with 16 beds. This option provides a bed on a first-come-first-served basis along with bath shower, laundry facilities, and two meals a day. It also provides case management and referrals to relevant agencies. Men who show initiative and are felt to be ready, can move over to the longer-term program at the house, as spots become available. It is our goal, as staff becomes available, to keep the Overnight Shelter open during the day, especially during inclement weather.

During the 2008/2009 fiscal year, 105 men have been served of which 68 (65%) have successfully graduated from the program. Some have gotten jobs, remained in contact and stayed in the area. Others spent one or two nights at the Overnight Shelter, simply passing through with no follow-up contact.

"I made a (w)reck of my life and I took my hand off the steering wheel and I told God I leave the driving to you. Two days later the Magistrate seen fit to bring (me) to the House of Hope. I was able to get my drivers license (back). I was able to achieve a year of sobriety. (I was) Able to pay off all fines because I had a shelter to achieve these things. Several influential people (staff and volunteers) helped me. The House of Hope helped me in many ways. It gave me a place to live, also a drug free environment. It gave me time to choose the proper way of life. It gave me time for God to do his awesome work. Without the House I would probably think in a negative aspect. It has given me love for individual(s) I meet, (it) gave me the ability to show love to a stranger. Sometimes I think "thank you" cheapens the gift I have been given, but they are the only words I know. Thank you." ST, employed at a convenience store.

“I was laid off in December of 2008. I started receiving unemployment benefits, but I was having a hard time paying my child support, my rent, and other bills. My driver’s license was also suspended making it hard to improve my situation. I came to the House of hope in May of 2009. They are giving me a place to live while I work on improving my circumstances. Since I have been at the House of Hope, I have been able to keep paying my child support. I have paid \$1,300.00 in fines that made it able for me to have my driver’s license re-instated. I have also recently found employment in the area. I am on the way to getting back on my feet and I wouldn’t be as far along as I am if not for the House of Hope.” SA, employed at a super-center.

Services to Individuals Other than Shelter Residents.

Although House of Hope is a men’s shelter, we provide available services as needed to families, women and children, neighbors, or anyone else in need. These services can be provided because the house is a 24-hour facility, whereas most social service agencies and food banks have limited hours. At times referrals may come at night, from Warren County Hospital, the Police Department, or the Sheriff’s Office.

The following services were provided to women and families during this time:

- (i) **Food.** According to records, eight men and six families were recorded as having received boxes of food. However, this is an understatement since residents know not to turn anyone away who comes to the house and asks for food. It is difficult to keep accurate records since there are times when volunteers are not at the house.
- (ii) **Clothing.** According to records, eight individuals were clothed, but again, this is an understatement. We receive many donations of clothes, and much of the surplus is passed on to other agencies such as The Salvation Army, Hospice, Goodwill, and Second Chance of the Council on Domestic Violence. This takes place on a monthly basis. The local community is very generous for which we are grateful.
- (iii) **Shelter Facilities.** Shower and laundry facilities were used 58 times by non-residents at the House. The Overnight Shelter has also been used by non-residents, but no records are kept.
- (iv) **Referrals and Services.** On numerous occasions consultation with the two volunteer case managers resulted in individuals being referred to other shelters. In one case, where a resident became very ill, one of the volunteer case managers took him home to recuperate. In another incident, an ex-resident became mentally unbalanced. One of our residents stayed two days at his apartment to keep him from harming himself until he could refill a prescription.

House of Hope Partners

House of Hope extends its heart felt thanks to its partners:

American Legion, American Red Cross, Blue Ridge Arts Council, Blue Ridge Opportunities, C-Cap, Community Transitional Housing Project, Front Royal Outreach

Center, Front Royal Police Department, Gladstone Studios, Hands to Create, Harmony Place/Council on Domestic Violence, Shenandoah web Design, Sheriff's Department, Northwestern Community Services, Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission, St. Luke's Community Clinic, Social Security Administration, United Way of Front Royal, Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, Warren County Health Department, and Warren County Social Services Department.

House of Hope Funding

During the 2008/2009 fiscal year, House of Hope doubled its expenses with the opening of the Overnight Shelter. Although House of Hope was denied the Federal Safe Haven grant it had applied for, it was the grateful recipient of a \$5,000 Emergency Donation from the County of Warren in November 2009. Fundraising is ongoing, and we will of course continue to apply for grants as they become available.

Major support for House of Hope in the community, comes from local churches, organizations such as American Legion, some businesses, and from generous individuals. These donations are both monetary and in kind.

The churches that support House of Hope include: Buckton Presbyterian Church, Calvary Episcopal Church, Cool Spring Church of God, Dynamic Life Praise and Worship Center, First Assembly of God, Fishnet Christian Center, Front Royal Church of the Brethren, Front Royal Presbyterian Church, Front Royal Outreach Center, Front Royal United Methodist Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Hope Free Will Baptist Church, Howellsville United Methodist Church, John Wesley United Methodist Church, Limeton United Methodist Church, Marlow Heights Baptist Church, Mount Vernon Baptist Church, New Hope Bible Church, Nineveh Presbyterian Church, Reliance United Methodist Church, Riverton United Methodist Church, Rock Worship Center, Rockland Community Church, Salvation Army, Self-Realization Fellowship Church, St. John the Baptist Catholic Church, and Unitarian Universalist Church of Shenandoah Valley.

House of Hope Board

As of June 30, 2009, board members include Jack Figgins from the Ministerial Association, Janice Hart, Liaison with the Front Royal Police Department, Ryan Henson, Treasurer, Sigrid "Siggi" Hepp-Dax, President, Al Lambert, Vice President, Wanda Moloney, Secretary, and Tammy Smelser and Don Smelser (both ex-officio members). Leslie Gardner served as ex-officio member and Executive Director until January 6, 2009.

Financial Statement

See Profit & Loss Statement from Solution Associates.

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02/16/10
Accrual Basis

House of Hope
Balance Sheet
As of June 30, 2009

Jun 30, 09

ASSETS

Current Assets

Checking/Savings

Operating 508.82

Savings 50.11

Total Checking/Savings 558.93

Total Current Assets 558.93

Fixed Assets

Furniture and Equipment 7,081.68

Total Fixed Assets 7,081.68

TOTAL ASSETS 7,640.61

LIABILITIES & EQUITY

Equity

Opening Balance Equity 10,568.75

Net Income -2,928.14

Total Equity 7,640.61

TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY 7,640.61

2:07 PM
02/15/10
Accrual Basis

House of Hope
Profit & Loss
July 2008 through June 2009

	<u>Jul '08 - Jun 09</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
Donations and Contributions	34,203.41
Fundraising Income	<u>19,985.96</u>
Total Income	<u>54,189.37</u>
Expense	
Automobile	2,474.12
Consumables	84.81
Dues and Licenses	1,352.76
Fundraising Expense	685.00
Misc.	249.69
Phone/Cable/Internet	3,364.53
Rent	24,000.00
Repair and Maintenance	7,676.43
Salary	9,028.90
Utilities	<u>8,201.27</u>
Total Expense	<u>57,117.51</u>
Net Ordinary Income	<u>-2,928.14</u>
Net Income	<u><u>-2,928.14</u></u>