

## Interfaith Action of Evanston

### Job Counselors Aid Homeless People

The first quarter of this year saw an increase in the number of people who visited the Hospitality Center. All the homeless people we serve have gone through intake with Connections for the Homeless. At our center, they have the opportunity to use our part-time job counselors, Elliot Zashin and Marcia Kemp-Rosen, who meet weekly with the staff of Hilda's Place and EntryPoint to learn how to best counsel their clients.

Some clients are working through multiple barriers, and not everyone is ready to begin a job search. These are times when the Help Wanted listings in the local paper have dwindled from two pages to two columns.

Elliot and Marcia meet privately with their clients at the Hospitality Center. Clients fill out a "Build Your Own Resumé" form and talk through the constant struggles of presenting an upbeat and assured presence while looking for and going from interview to interview. Elliot sees himself as more a coach than a counselor because he and Marcia encourage as well as make suggestions. Clients' skills and education vary greatly, so they are seeking a variety of jobs. Sometimes people are

encouraged to serve as volunteers in work which may eventually lead to paid positions. The Center does not serve as an employment agency, and most jobs are found by people pounding the pavement on their own. Volunteers at National Student Partnerships often help with the specific formatting and printing of resumes.

Counselors keep in touch with other agencies that might provide employment suggestions. Ideally

they seek positions that are close by to keep down the cost of commuting, and for the most part they find jobs in customer service. Elliot and Marcia spend much of their time networking and are always open to creative ideas and new sources of employment.

Persons with knowledge of job opportunities may always leave word for our dedicated coaches by contacting Sue Murphy at the Hospitality Center.

Marge Bradford

### Programs Educate Delegates

"Issues Surrounding Homelessness" was the theme for the 2008-9 Interfaith Action Delegates meetings. In September, Paul Selden, executive director of Connections for the Homeless, and Karen Singer, executive director of the Evanston-North Shore YWCA spoke. Mr. Selden presented an overview of Evanston's homeless population, and Ms. Singer described the situation that women and their children face when they must leave their homes to avoid abuse.

In January, IAE featured a conversation with Henry Colquitt, the coordinator of Health Services at Connections, and Dr. Norman Ryan, a coordinator at the evening health clinic at the Franciscan Shelter on Chicago's

West Side. Both speakers discussed typical health care needs of homeless persons. As a result of this meeting, an Evanston dentist has offered a monthly program of free treatment.

Suzanne Calder, chair of the Evanston Alliance on Homelessness and facilitator of Evanston Housing 4 All, and Dr. George Paul, a member of Connections' housing committee and an Evanston landlord, spoke on "Housing and Homelessness" in May. Ms. Calder addressed the lack of truly affordable housing, and Dr. Paul described how he and his tenants work together to achieve affordable rents in exchange for services such as elder care and landscape maintenance.

Carolyn Gifford

*..to bring together communities of faith and spirit to serve people who are hungry and homeless and to express our shared values through action and interfaith dialogue.*

Interfaith Action of Evanston Purpose Statement

## Vision Keepers

The Vision Keepers Dinner was a huge success! Three hundred people applauded the following people, who were honored by their faith communities as Vision Keepers:

**Bahá'í Faith**

**Theresa Zingery**

Beth Emet

**Nancy Bashook**

Ebenezer A.M.E.

**Geraldine Sizemore**

First Congregational

**Martha Beckwith**

First Presbyterian

**Dick Warnecke**

First United Methodist

**Phyllis Bird**

**Martha Rudy**

Grace Lutheran

**Robert Lamont**

Immanuel Lutheran

**Jared Magil**

Jewish Reconstructionist

Congregation

**Elaine Waxman**

Northminster Presby-

terian

**Pam, Mary, Paul Rolfes**

Second Baptist

**Carolyn Sayre**

**Lonnie Barefield**

Sheil Catholic Center

**Michael and Nicole**

**Perry**

Sherman

**Darlene Eady**

St. Athanasius

**Christine Carlson,**

**Karen Ryan,**

**Kris Koenig-Morel**

St. John Evangelical

**Cindi Rachowicz**

St. Mark

**Sally Lufkin**

St. Mary

**Jay and Marcia Larmee**

St. Nicholas

**Rosalie Murphy**

St. Paul Lutheran

**Susan Salisbury**

Trinity Lutheran

**Tom Carson**

University Lutheran

**Kristen Pappacena**

**Travis Zupfer**

Wilmette Lutheran

**Barbara Hiller**

## Friday Lunch Program Off to Good Start

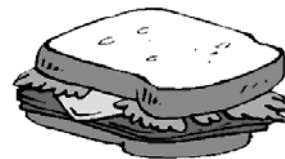
"How do we do this? This is our first time here," a mother with two children told me last week when she entered the kitchen of the Friday Sack Lunch at First Congregational Church. I told her they could grab a lunch and go to the next room for condiments, water, and a place to sit down. A friend greeted her while they grabbed their sack lunches and went to the other room. On their way out, I wished them a nice weekend, and the young boy smiled at me and wished me the same. This family serves as just one example of the grateful guests who come to the Friday Sack Lunch.

The lunch began on February 27<sup>th</sup>, after I, as an undergraduate at Northwestern University and part of the interfaith group on campus, volunteered the group to pack and serve the meal. Another week, I asked friends to volunteer,

but now, through another student group, I bring students to volunteer monthly. I know the guests enjoy the lunch when they continuously ask for more. Recently, one guest came up to me claiming that there was no food in his bag. I called his bluff, and we had a laugh over his attempt to get another meal.

While the guests enjoy the meal and company, I appreciate the opportunity to not only serve a meal and help meet the basic need of hunger but also meet other human needs, by treating them with respect and having some fun.

Jackie Grinvalds



## Hospitality Center News

Interfaith Action is continually blessed by the kindness of others. During the last few months we have received several unexpected and much appreciated gifts, large and small.

Oakton Community College sponsors the Empty Bowl program. They serve a wonderful lunch in bowls made by members of their ceramics program and give the proceeds to agencies providing food to the hungry. We are a recipient this year for the second time.

The Woman's Club of Evanston has chosen us to receive a grant to help fund the Friday soup kitchen. This will enable us to have more student groups participate. They will learn about helping the hungry, and the guests will benefit from their young, happy faces.

Two junior high students collected items for our guests as a service project for their Bat Mitzvah. They donated chapstick, soap, toothbrushes, toothpaste, tissue, umbrellas, ponchos and many other items that are badly needed by the guests of the Hospitality Center.

Every Monday, a volunteer brings egg strata and bagels to the Hospitality Center guests. On Friday morning, another brings fresh blueberry pancakes.

Twice a week, a volunteer brings sweets from Bennison's, and another has been bringing sweets from Dominick's every Thursday for several years.

A wonderful woman shops for our groceries once a week. She provides the staples of our food to feed 35 people each morning.

Ten committed people take a two-hour shift every day to greet people as they come to the Hospitality Center. Another five people are willing substitutes when someone needs to take a day off!

Every Friday, a volunteer brings beautiful beads to the Hospitality Center, so the guests can make jewelry. They talk and laugh, and, just maybe, they forget their problems for a little while.

The Evanston Community Foundation selected Interfaith Action to receive a grant to continue to improve the programs.

There are dozens of people who volunteer at the soup kitchens and the warming centers.

Interfaith Action exists because of people who are generous with their time and their money. There is simply no way to thank them enough.

Sue Murphy

# Identifying Organizations

At the May delegates meeting on homelessness in Evanston, some people were bewildered by all the organizations and programs mentioned. Maybe this will help.

**Center for Independent Futures-** Helps young adults with disabilities live independently.

**Connections for the Homeless -** The agency with which IA's hospitality center has the closest working relationship. Its parts include

Entrypoint— outreach and drop-in services to people living on the streets.

Hilda's Place – transitional shelter with supportive services for single adults.

Family Housing and Permanent Supportive Housing

Prevention Services – rent and utility assistance for those at risk.

**Evanston/North Shore YWCA Battered Women's Shelter** - Provides crisis intervention, emergency shelter, transitional housing, community-based services, legal advocacy, violence prevention, community outreach and education.

**Housing Options for the Mentally Ill-** Provides affordable housing and support for adults.

**HUD - U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development -** Among many programs includes:

Federal Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Evanston CDBG funds focus on low- and moderate-income individuals, families and

neighborhoods to provide decent housing and expand economic opportunities.

Section 8. HUD rental voucher program increases affordable housing choices for very low-income households.

**Interfaith Housing Center of the Northern Suburbs** - Based in Winnetka, advocates for fair and affordable housing in the northern suburbs; assists in cases of housing discrimination, foreclosure, and conflict with a landlord or management company.

Homesharing Program matches people needing housing with those who have a room to spare.

**Evanston Property Owners Association** - Educates and advocates on matters related to ownership and management of real estate property.

**Reba Place Development Corp.** - A ministry of Reba Place Church that develops affordable properties.

Patty Baker

## ***New Schedule of Meals***

<b>Sunday:</b> 3:00 Lunch St. Paul Lutheran*	<b>Thursday:</b> 6:00 Dinner First United Methodist*
<b>Monday:</b> 12:00 Lunch Second Baptist*	<b>Friday:</b> 12:00 Sack Lunch First Congregational*
<b>Tuesday:</b> 12:00 Lunch Second Baptist	<b>Saturday:</b> 11:30 Lunch First Presbyterian
<b>Wednesday:</b> 6:00 Dinner Beth Emet	*Provided by Interfaith Action of Evanston

*Here's my donation*

*In support of Interfaith Action's work*

\$25 \_\_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

Please make all checks payable to Interfaith Action of Evanston and mail to Interfaith Action of Evanston, P.O. Box 1414, Evanston IL 60204.

## Board Changes

This spring was a time for farewells on the Board of Directors. President **Sheri Delvin** resigned because of her husband's job reassignment to the California office. The Delvins will now be near their children and Sheri's mother, so it is a good move for them. Still, Pastor Sheri and Rick were sad to leave the St. Paul and Interfaith communities.

Vice President **Seth Weinberger's** three year term ended, and he also resigned. Seth's precise, legal mind was invaluable in guiding Interfaith Action through the transition from EEAC to the present interfaith organization. Seth was also responsible for the Seasons of Faith program plan.

Bahá'í Faith Delegate **Theresa Zingery** will be leaving the board as soon as her Evanston condo is sold. Theresa served as board secretary for several years and was always astute in searching out fund-raising opportunities. She leaves because her husband has accepted a position as a Unitarian minister in St. Paul.

**Claire Fisher**, who coordinated the Monday soup kitchen for seven years, has finally succumbed to the lure of Anna Maria Island in Florida. The Fishers will be moving as soon as they sell their Evanston house.

# Renee Accepts Friday Challenge



For many years, it was Interfaith Action's wish to have a free meal available every day of the week in Evanston, but there was always a Friday gap. Now, thanks to

the generous people at First Congregational Church, who provide the site, and Renee Lanam, who provides the coordination of efforts, a lunch is offered on Friday. Since February, Renee has made the new kitchen run smoothly. This soup kitchen differs from the others because it can match people who want to offer financial support, people who can make the lunches, and people who wish to serve at noon on Fridays.

Renee was looking for a way to help when she heard an appeal by Rev. Jessica Gregory of the IA board. She was attracted to ministry and was intrigued by the interfaith work because it transcended individual church boundaries and provided a unifying influence in the community.

## Beach Meditation Service

**September 7, 2009,**

**9:00 A.M.**

**Clark Street Beach**

**Led by Dick Whitaker**

**Rain site: Parkes Hall, Room 122,  
1870 Sheridan Road**

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