



Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester

IHN *Where people of faith work together to support homeless families*
news

Volume 9, Issue 2

June 2010



ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

NEW FUNDRAISING INITIATIVES A SUCCESS!

Ride for a Reason

On Saturday, June 12 the advisory committee of the Interfaith Hospitality Network launched the “First Annual *Ride for a Reason*” to benefit our program. Despite “iffy” weather and one or two last minute worries, it was a smashing success! After hearing about the ride through our network congregations, bike shop/ bike club on-line event calendars, newspapers announcements and word of mouth, forty riders participated in our 30 mile and 15 mile rides through Holden, W. Boylston, Sterling and Princeton and together raised over \$4,000! The fundraiser was a real team effort. **Jan Gregory-Charpentier and Amy MacDougall**, IHN committee members and avid cyclists themselves, came up with the idea last fall. They quickly recruited **Cyndy Janik, from First Congregational Church, Holden and Rebecca Welch, from United Parish of Upton** (both network member congregations) and got to work planning and preparing this winter. The real “hero” of this fundraiser (and our companion fundraiser, *Vacation with a Mission*) is our IHN webmaster, **Dan Keohane**, who learned-on-the-job how to create on-line registration sites. Without our fundraiser having a “web presence” and

on-line registration capabilities, we would never have enjoyed the success we did! Thank you, Dan! But indispensable help also came from: **Joanne Alley** (of course!); rest stop hosts **Ranny and Lynn** (at Sterling and W. Boylston network churches); start/ finish host site **First Congregational Church of Holden; Fresco’s Restaurant (in Upton, MA)** donating complimentary lunch for the riders and volunteers; the law offices of **Robert Kovacs**; which donated our *Ride for a Reason* t-shirts for all riders; **Dayle Doherty** who designed our event logo and printed materials; **Deb Richards**, board member who helped staff start/finish line, and, of course, our riders! The report from most every rider was that (while there were some route marking glitches – “Don’t use light blue paint for road blazes next time!”) they were enthusiastic, enjoyed the routes immensely and are eager to do it again and bring their friends to make it bigger and better next year. Ride on!

Vacation with a Mission

Saturday, June 12 also brought our *Vacation with a Mission* fundraiser to an exciting conclusion. Six friends of the IHN had donated their vacation homes for either a week or

weekend, and in exchange for a generous \$100 donation, contributors to the IHN could put their name into a drawing for one of the six vacation opportunities. This campaign, like *Ride for a Reason*, was a brand new fundraiser for the IHN and while a little slower to get off the ground than hoped for, picked up steam in the end and raised over \$3,000.00 for our program! Donors could choose from a week at Sunday River Ski Resort, a weekend in Quechee, VT or on Great Pond in Maine, a week in Ocean Park, Maine or on Lake Umbagog or Webster Lake in MA. The winning names were pulled from the bowl at the end of our *Ride for a Reason* event on June 12 and happy winners were notified that day (see page 3 for winner names). Thank you SO much to those who donated their homes! Thank you to those who made a pledge of \$100 in support of IHN of Greater Worcester and earned a chance at winning a wonderful vacation. **Dayle Doherty, of the United Parish in Upton**, designed our *Vacation with a Mission* printed materials and the remarkable web skills of **Dan Keohane** provided our on-line registration site. Thank you to the congregations that helped us spread the word! We hope next year will be even bigger and better!

Co-ordinator’s Corner

Host Sites

July

- 6/27/10 – 7/11/10 St. Stephen’s Westborough
- 7/11 – 7/18 Zion Lutheran, Worcester
- 7/18 – 7/25 First Congregational, Auburn
- 7/25 – 8/1 Pakachoag, Auburn

August

- 8/1 – 8/8 St. Peter’s, Worcester
- 8/8 – 8/15 St. James’, Grafton
- 8/15 – 8/22 Evangelical Congregational, Grafton
- 8/22 – 8/29 St. Mary’s, Grafton

September

- 8/29 – 9/5 **OPEN**
- 9/5 – 9/12 Blessed Sacrament, Worcester
- 9/12 – 9/26 First Congregational, Shrewsbury
- 9/26 – 10/3 First United Methodist, Westborough

Our Guests

- Mom and Dad with 13 year old daughter
- Mom and Dad with 14 year old son
- Mom with a 4 month old daughter
- Mom with a 4 year old daughter



A WORD FROM THE DIRECTOR

PROGRAM UPDATES *Joanne Alley, Director*

Fire & Code - Short-term Good News

I recently attended the Board of Building Regulations and Standards public hearing in Wellesley. At that meeting the Board voted to rescind the language in the regulations that stated congregations could not provide overnight shelter to anyone between June 15 and Sept 15. This means that IHN's, as well as other programs, do not have to cease operating during the summer months.

The Board also voted to allow congregations to host up to 14 consecutive days, but only through Sept 30. A committee will be formed this summer (comprised of representatives from Fire and Code, as well as one or two individuals from agencies that work with sheltering families in congregations) who will work on defining exactly what will be included in the regulations. The primary goal is to protect the families who are being sheltered, so all code and fire safety concerns will be addressed. There is the possibility that the length of time a congregation can host will be limited to 7 consecutive days, but that has yet to be determined. No other votes on any of the other issues are expected until after the newly formed committee brings their recommendations to both Boards in September.

The Flip Side of Fire & Code - Immediate Challenges

As many of you know, not all of our congregations have passed inspection. Compounding the problem, two of our longtime host congregations are no longer able to participate in the program. This has left us with five open weeks to fill in the schedule this year, which has proven to be quite a challenge for us. One congregation who did not pass inspection was able to house the families in another of their

buildings; however most of our congregations do not have any alternative space for the families to stay.

Thankfully each time a congregation was unable to host, another has graciously come forward and offered their site to shelter the families. It began in April when **First Congregational in Princeton** was unable to host their week. **First Church in Sterling** offered their site for the families and the folks from Princeton covered the entire week at First Church, providing all of the volunteers, meals, supplies, etc. In May, **Wesley United Methodist Church** offered to host the families when we had no place for them to go the week before Memorial Day. In a real group effort volunteers came forward, not only from Wesley, but from many of our congregations to provide the meals, supplies and coverage for the evening and overnight.

And most recently, when we found out that yet another congregation would not be able to host in July (due to fire and code safety concerns), **Zion Lutheran Church** came forward to offer to host the families the week of July 11 -18.

A most heartfelt thank you goes out to each congregation and to every volunteer who stepped forward (or will step forward in July) to help, whether by providing meals or supplies, offering to host during the evening or staying overnight. Thanks to all of you, our families have remained safely sheltered!

Unfortunately, there is still one week left on our schedule this year (8/29 to 9/5) when we know the families have no place to stay, and sadly we don't know how many more times our families may be without a place to stay if any more congregations do not pass inspection. I ask for your continue support as we navigate through these difficult times.

Please let me know if your congregation is willing and able to host the families at the end of August.

Working Toward A Future of Stability

In light of all of all the hurdles we face with Fire & Code, the IHN Advisory Committee is exploring options to secure the uncertainties we face. It remains questionable as to who will or will not be able to host. As a result, we are exploring the option of a static site for the program. In this model, volunteers would continue to provide meals, supplies and support, but they would come to the families rather than the families traveling to the congregations. While a static site would increase IHN's budget, the families would *always be assured of a safe place to stay.*

Please keep IHN in your prayers. Pray that we can continue our mission to provide shelter for families in need and that our families will have a safe place to lay their heads at night, whether it is in a static site or in our congregations. Thank you.



WISH LIST

- Gas cards
- Tissues
- Acetaminophen for infants
- Disinfectant spray/wipes
- Socks for women and children
- Thank you, please contact Joanne at 508-798-6732



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT FUN- RAISING

This past Spring, a number of host sites rallied together as a community, had some fun (and good eats) and helped raise revenue for the IHN program and the families it serves. Special thanks to:

Evangelical Congregational Church who raised \$900 for IHN through their "Italian Night" supper;

First Church in Sterling who raised \$1500 for IHN through their Palm Sunday Promenade and \$7500 through the Treasures of the Community Auction!

And to **everyone** who took part in our Ride for a Reason and Vacation with a Mission fundraisers; a total of \$8000 was raised from both events!

Congratulations

Vacation with a Mission Winners!

Sunday River, ME
Rev. Lee Atherton

Webster Lake, MA
Jen McKean

Ocean Park, ME
Amy Coburn Gaudet

Lake Manchaug, MA
Gail Bergeron

Quechee, VT
David Sampson

Great Pond, ME
Wendy Waegel

And thank you to ALL who donated and contributed in any way! We are grateful for your support!
Joanne & Advisory Committee

THE BIG PICTURE IN THE FOREFRONT,

Janet Madison, Advisory Committee

Willy Nelson sang a lovely ballad with the chorus "You were always on my mind, you were always on my mind". This line from the song reminds me of the love we extend to our families not only during our host weeks but throughout the year. We need to remember that our families plight doesn't begin and end after a visit at a host site. It began way before they came to us: as they struggled to make ends meet, failed, had to reach out for help, received that help and stability, moved onto a place of their own, and then try to maintain that new-found stability. It is a long-term process. It is a reminder of how important the services we provide are, not just on the short-term but long-term.

It is pertinent that we keep the IHN program forefront in our minds throughout the year.

Volunteer

the IHN Advisory Committee has one major goal over the summer months and that is for each one of us to recommend and hopefully recruit a volunteer to serve on the IHN Advisory Committee.

Advocate

How can we build awareness of homelessness in our communities? How can you take advantage of IHN's Speakers Bureau to talk about IHN within you faith communities, towns, clubs and businesses?

Support

Keep IHN on your mind with personal contributions; gift /gas card contributions; fundraising; corporate matching programs and corporate/ business sponsorships.

As you rest and refresh your weary bones over the summer months seriously consider how you can reach out and keep us "always on your mind"

IN THE SPOTLIGHT WELCOME BACK!

Who says you can't keep it in the family? The IHN Advisory Committee was pleasantly surprised and thankful to welcome back two past committee members. Brother-Sister team, **Kevin Kirwan and Janet Kirwan Madison** stepped up and rejoined the committee after a year-long+ hiatus. Both had to refocus their attention to the care of their father, Jack, who passed away last November after a long illness. So supportive of the IHN program is this family that their father's last wish was, "in lieu of flowers please make contributions to IHN, Worcester"!

In the past, Kevin has served as Treasurer and on-call volunteer during weekends. Janet has served in the capacities as Chair, Co-chair and Marketing Communications specialist. Both are anxious to get back to work on behalf of IHN.

On another note. IHN would like to thank **Dave Farabaugh** for his service over the last few years. Dave has retired from the Advisory Committee as of June. His contributions to the committee are appreciated and we wish him a long and prosperous future. Thank you Dave!



SPEAKER BUREAU

Want your community or other organization to know more about IHN? Would you like to schedule a presentation? IHN has enthusiastic people waiting to talk with you. Please contact Joanne at 508-798-6732.

Question: Where did you spend your summer when you were 13 and 14 years old?



Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester

IHN

*Where people of faith work together
to support homeless families throughout
the greater Worcester area.*

Newsletter

*The IHN newsletter continues to be made possible by
the spirit of a **Common Mission:***

*Contributing Reporters: **Joanne Alley, Jan
Gregory-Charpentier, Janet Madison***

*Printing & Mailing: **Phil Holman, President and
owner of Four Star Connections, Inc.***

*Publisher: **Janet Madison***

Thank you!

*The Interfaith Hospitality Network is an organization that unites the
religious community in an effort to serve and nurture families who are
homeless regardless of income and family structure. Thirty-one
congregations, many with assistance from additional congregations,
provide meals, shelter and hospitality. Families receive individualized
advocacy for housing, employment, and financial issues at the IHN day
center. Massachusetts is the 5th least affordable state in the country for
housing and about 20,000 children live in emergency shelters each year.
Greater Worcester's IHN has helped 255 families, a total of 754
individuals, since its formation in 1997. IHN makes a difference!*



Interfaith Hospitality Network of Greater Worcester

IHN

114 Main Street
Worcester, MA 01608

Phone: 508-798-6732

FAX: 508-798-8286

www.ihnworchester.org

TO:

*Where people of faith work together
to support families who are homeless
throughout the greater Worcester area.*