



The Haven Herald

November 2010

Upper Valley Haven • 713 Hartford Ave. • White River Junction, VT 05001
(802) 295-6500 • Fax (802) 296-5055 • www.uppervalleyhaven.org

MEETING OUR COMMUNITY'S NEEDS

There are over 5,000 people who are homeless in VT and NH every night.

In order to afford a \$920 2-bedroom rental, basic transportation, and food, a family must earn above minimum wage, and at least \$36,000 annually. We see over 6,000 people a year who fall woefully short of that income level.

There is a multi-year wait for Section 8 Housing Vouchers, one of few tools to bridge the income gap.

One in 8 Upper Valley households is food insecure, and 20% of them with children reported running out of food due to lack of money in 2009. We serve over 700 households per month in our Food Shelf, and give away well over \$500,000 of food each year. Much of this food is donated, but we have also purchased \$100,000 worth to be sure the shelves are not empty.

Poverty, hunger and homelessness in our community have reached staggering numbers and will only increase in the months ahead.

In order to better serve those struggling in the Upper Valley our generous community has helped to transform the Haven campus!

The addition and opening of Hixon House Adult Shelter in June allows us

to serve up to 20 adults at a time. To help this population and those in the Byrne House Family Shelter move forward in life the Haven uses the Case Management approach. Together, Case Managers and guests develop individualized plans by assessing the current status of housing, income, health, mental health, transportation, and education, and outlining goals for improvement and success. Our Case Managers also provide emotional support and advocacy, and help connect guests with additional services already available in our community. Both Shelters continue to see positive results, and in the short five months the Adult Shelter has been open, 26 guests have moved to permanent housing.

The Haven has also expanded the Food Shelf and food storage space. In August 2010 we broke our previous record, serving 759 households in one month. With so many people going through the Haven, there was a shortage of food storage and shelf space for distribution. We recently replaced three old refrigerators with one commercial walk-in cooler, and four inefficient freezers with a commercial walk-in freezer. The Haven gained over 500 cubic feet of space and 10 times the energy

efficiency. With more space, the Haven was able to modify the layout of Byrne House by dedicating a whole wing to food, and relocating Reception, the Clothing Room, and Healthy Eating demonstrations to the front end of the building. Visitors no longer have to go in the back/side door, but are greeted at the main entrance. They have a choice of observing cooking demonstrations, having coffee and a snack in the new Haven Café, or browsing our Clothing Room while waiting for their turn to "shop" the Food Shelf with volunteer assistance.

We've also converted the former host family residence to the Beverly Fowle Fiertz Community House at the Haven. The Haven is honored to associate Beverly Fiertz's name with the Community Center. Beverly set an incredible example by balancing her artistic creativity with her legal



advocacy for those in need. It is the goal of the Fiertz family to continue this legacy by giving people experiencing poverty the opportunity for change in their lives and internal discovery through expressive arts, and the backing of legal expertise. Updating this building has given us additional space for community meetings, the Children's Afterschool Program, Expressive Arts for children and adults as well as other activities. The After School Program now enjoys the warm and inviting space for reading, one-on-one tutoring, educational games, and active projects.

With all the changes happening at the Haven, we would like to have you a visit our campus for a tour. In the meantime, we give you this "paper" tour.

SAVE THE DATE!

UPPER VALLEY HAVEN SNOW JAM

A family fun event!

Sunday, December 19, 2010

9am-4pm - Dartmouth Skiway

Tickets: Adults \$75 & kids \$50

Start this ski season right! Get your skis out of storage and drop them off for a free tune-up, learn tips from the Pros, and get your legs back underneath you! Ski with two-time Silver medal winner, **Penny Pitou**, and bid on auction items from **Hannah Kearney**.

Ticket price includes a free ski tune-up at Golf & Ski or Henderson's Ski & Snow shop, an all-day lift ticket to Dartmouth Skiway, a private buffet lunch, the opportunity to ski with a Pro to receive season-opener tips, group ski lessons for children, children's activities & 1-hour care option, giveaways and more! **To order your tickets today, call 802-478-1804.**

Sign up for our monthly **E-NEWSLETTER** for more stories from the Haven! www.uppervalleyhaven.org

Let the tour begin... at Byrne House, our Family Shelter

Amanda came to the Byrne House Family shelter after fleeing an abusive relationship. Six months pregnant, and mother of a two-year-old, she had a lot to grapple with and overcome.

She came to the Haven with the clear goal of achieving permanent housing in the community before her second child was born. She worked diligently with her Case Manager, developing a sense of independence along the way. She moved into a new home a week before she delivered her second son. Mom and kids are happy, healthy, and participating in our Aftercare Program.

In 10 months of 2010, the Haven has provided shelter to 35 families, including 52 children. The Case Managers work with each family to achieve financial, housing, education, child development and transportation objectives. There is no time limit for stays. All residents of the Byrne House are required to search for employment, save for security deposits, and work together with other residents completing community tasks. Most families find and maintain permanent housing and jobs as a result of their time at the Haven.

THE BYRNE HOUSE AT THE HAVEN - THE COMMUNITY'S FAMILY SHELTER EXPLORE THE FOOD SHELF, CLOTHING ROOM AND MORE...

Food Shelf

Just about two years ago I found myself in a situation that I had never been in before: **I needed to ask for help.**

My fiancé and I had just bought a house, set the date for our wedding, and were expecting our first child. Little did we know that my job was about to be cut from the budget, his pay was being cut back 10%, and his hours down to 4 days a week.

After going to the State of Vermont for help and still struggling to make ends meet, we turned to the Haven. It was not a natural thing to do. Having grown up the area, I was involved in food drives, making donations, and reading about this organization in the paper. We even asked friends and family to donate to the Haven in our name instead of a wedding gift.

The first time I visited the Haven I didn't tell anyone, not even my husband. I almost felt ashamed.

When I entered the Haven I was surprised, and not surprised at the same time, to find that there were a lot of other families in very similar situations. It was comforting to know that we were not the only ones who just needed that little bit extra to get by.



Now I know that our situation is not a unique one, and compared to some families we are

lucky. Even so, it was a scary time for my family. I'm glad the Haven was there when we needed it most. I continue to make donations when I can to ensure the Haven's help for others in need. - Former Food Shelf visitor

The Haven is seeing more and more visitors to our Food Shelf who are victims of situational poverty, and many people are just one or two paychecks away from not being able to pay the mortgage or rent. It's a delicate web, and when one support breaks, the rest can disintegrate.

During the first eight months of 2010 the Haven has already provided a week's worth of food to 1,942 unduplicated households, including 6,062 persons, totaling 14,532 weeks of food. This is 32% more than last year and we haven't even reached the winter months.

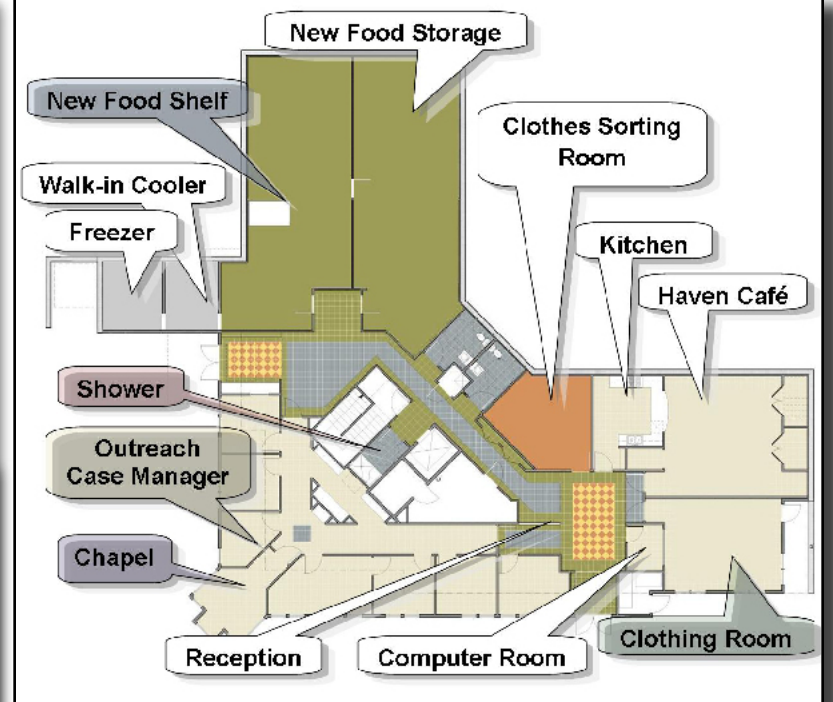
Outreach Program

I am a veteran. I am a child of a mother who died of cancer. I am a guitar player. I am a piano player. I am a song writer. I am a furniture mover in the summer. I am a fast food attendant in the winter. I need help renting an apartment. - Anonymous Community Member

Sam came to the Haven this fall hoping to rent an apartment, without the means to do so. After a visit with Nancy Griffin, our Outreach Case Manager, the Haven was able to help him close the gap to have enough money for a security deposit for his new apartment. Many people come through our doors in need of more than food, clothing and/or a shower. Sometimes they are in need of shelter when all of our beds are full. Other times they are housed, but most precariously because they are choosing between paying the rent or their utility bill, which might be a month overdue. Other times they have medical issues that have compromised their employment status. Our Outreach Case Managers assist these people with short-term development of solutions and referrals to other organizations for longer term help. Because of their strong interface with the community, these Case Managers also provide the Aftercare support to guests moving into permanent housing from both the Family and Adult Shelters.



Byrne House First Floor Layout



Chapel

This tranquil space at the front corner of Byrne House serves many purposes at the Haven - meeting space, waiting room, quiet place for reflection, study hall. It provides a warm, safe feeling to those using it whether it's the ESL student studying, the service providers rallying around a community member, or a tired traveler waiting for shelter.



Shower

Just because I'm homeless doesn't mean I don't want to be clean. Every day the Haven is open I use the shower to clean myself up, and get ready for the long day ahead. There is nothing better than a hot shower and clean towel on a bone-chilling day. Most people would never know that I am homeless; I dress well, drive a nice car and take care of myself. With the shower, a warm cup of coffee and some food from the Haven each day I make living out of my car work for me. I feel lucky for that. - Anonymous

The shower, towels and toiletries are available Monday through Friday from 8:30am to 4pm.

Clothing Room

For the folks visiting the Haven to pick up groceries, take a warm shower, or consult with a staff member, the Haven's "Clothing Boutique" is more than a place to find much-needed clothing free of charge. For many visitors, a leisurely browse through the clothing racks is a welcome diversion from their daily worries and stresses. It's an opportunity to find that special hidden treasure for a mother, daughter or grandfather. It's a "girls' afternoon out" with a sister or friend; a chance to trade fashion advice and compliments. It's a place for young mothers to connect with one another while sifting through the kids' winter wear. Finally, it's an opportunity for the recipients of Haven services to give back to their community by making donations of no longer needed clothing to the Boutique. The Boutique is a place to give and to receive clothing and emotional fellowship with dignity. - Elaine Lacy, Haven Volunteer

We offer free donated clothing to anyone in need. For the clothing that we cannot redistribute, we are part of a recycling effort that sorts by fiber content to eliminate any waste.



HIXON HOUSE AT THE HAVEN - THE COMMUNITY'S ADULT SHELTER

Kitchen and Dining Room

One cold fall night, a guest at our Hixon House Adult Shelter brought his recently acquired guitar to the Dining Room. He was passionately interested in learning to play the guitar, and was attempting to tune it when an amateur musician on our staff, Alan, came out to help. Alan began to play a few songs which caught the attention of a volunteer who was cooking dinner for the guests, and another Shelter guest. More people joined in and a jam session began. Soon there was a room full of people, from all walks of life, playing and listening to music; smiling and enjoying each other's company without any social divide.

This moment brought people together and inspired other Shelter guests to learn to play the guitar. It also encouraged



the volunteer to donate a guitar to one of our guests. Now, around dinner time in Hixon House, you will often hear guitar music, see smiles on the faces of those that are listening, and feel the magic that happens at the Haven.

More than 19 teams of volunteers have provided dinners to guests at Hixon House since the opening in June. Meal times are vital to breaking down social barriers. Dinner time at Hixon House is an opportunity for guests in the Shelter, Haven staff and members of the community to come to the tables as equals; sharing life experiences with one another while increasing social skills and deepening empathy and understanding in our community.

DID YOU KNOW....

The Haven provides about **40 showers** Monday - Friday each week to people not living in our shelters?

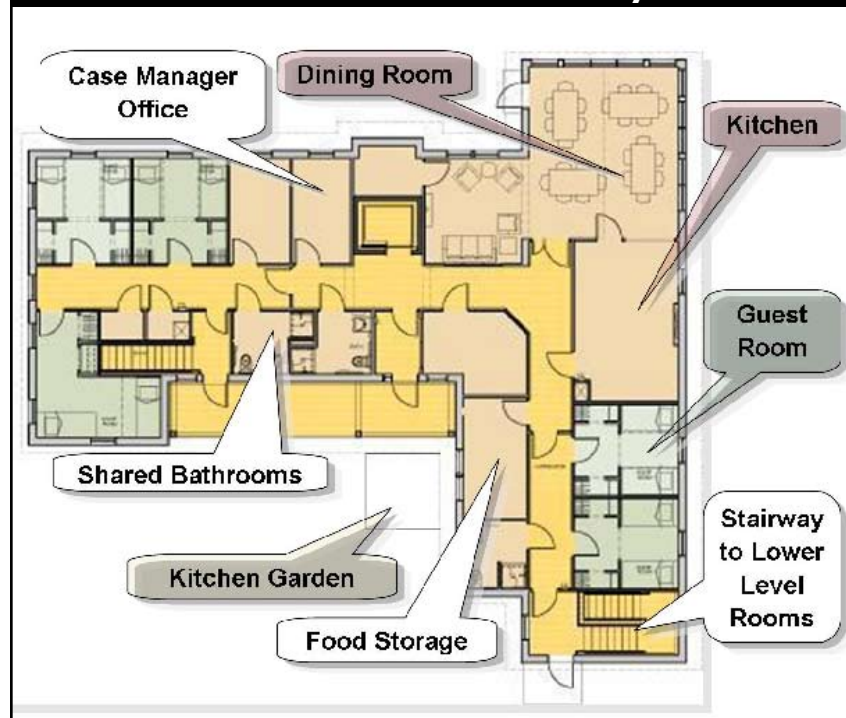
The Haven offers bikes to help our adult guests get to work and important appointments?

The Haven **recycles any clothing** that can't be used in our Clothing Room?

The Haven has an **edible landscape**?

The Haven has a **community meeting room**?

Hixon House First Floor Layout



Guest Room at Hixon House

Joan and Bill moved into the Hixon House Adult Shelter after a downward spiral of bad luck: back injury, loss of a job and eventual eviction from their apartment. Joan and Bill tried to survive on their own, moving from campsite to campsite, trying to save the little income they had for a more permanent living space. Luckily, at the same time they moved into Hixon House, Bill got another job. Not having to worry about where they were going to sleep and whether it would be safe made it easier for Bill to thrive at work. Within three weeks of moving in, they were moving out - into their own apartment!

The new shelter has room for up to 20 guests, with two guests in each bedroom. Space includes 10 bedrooms,

staff offices, counseling rooms, check-in, an elevator, computer room, kitchen, library, phone rooms, common areas for dining and recreation, bathrooms, and storage.

Hixon House at the Haven provides for individuals and couples what the Haven Family Shelter provides for families: a safe place to stay while making positive changes in their life. During the first four months of operation, Hixon House has hosted 56 individuals.

Twenty are currently guests, and of the other 36, 26 have achieved permanent housing.



Adult Education: Expressive Arts, Job Training and Job Smarts

"I realized I was not stupid, and not alone. A lot of people are unemployed. I now know the importance of a hand shake and eye contact, have a great resume, and have the courage to walk into an interview and talk about my strengths..." - Haven Job Training Participant

The concept of Adult Education at the Haven is based on the individualized principles of adult learning, and four levels of personal transformation. The first level is Inner Self which is primarily defined by self-esteem and self-acceptance. This is the foundation for successful learning. We help clients achieve this first level through our Expressive Arts Program. These opportunities draw on creativity, and promote socialization, self-confidence and self-expression among people whose low self-esteem has been reinforced by poverty and homelessness. The arts are broad and include traditional media such as photography, print making, wood working,

painting and sculpture, as well as music, dance and drama, and all can be vital tools for self-discovery. The second level is Motivation; motivation for change and the willingness to take risks. During this stage individuals identify what they want to change and personal goals and activities to work toward success. This level is individualized, and developed and achieved with the guidance of Case Managers. Each person has an individualized plan which outlines their current situation and goals for progress and success. The



third component is Tools, which are concrete skills that are learned through more practical education. Our Job Smarts Program, a partnership with

the Career Development Office (CDO) at the Tuck School of Business, is one option in building a toolbox. The program's goal is to leverage the strategies the CDO uses to guide their MBA students through the recruiting process to help the Haven's low-income residents successfully manage the job search process. It covers all aspects of employment success from identifying skills and proper presentation at an interview to resume writing and role playing to build self-confidence. The last level is Accomplishment, and is defined by successful achievement of goals, and ultimately, sustainability. Results of the Adult Education Program are measured in increased confidence and sense of self-worth and by whether skills are mastered, taking into consideration that accomplishments need to be assessed on the individual level, instead of being defined in relation to others.

BEV'S HOUSE AT THE HAVEN IT ALL BEGINS WITH EDUCATION...

After School Program

"Human beings are story-tellers. We organize the events of our lives, small and large, into coherent stories. In doing so, we create order out of chaos, meaning out of randomness. Story-telling, as a basic, adaptive human competency, is vital, and opportunities to create and share stories are essential to healthy relationships and self-understanding." - Lori Ladd-Brown

As part of our efforts with current and former shelter children, Lori led a series of creative writing workshops for our teens this summer. Their writing was rich and imaginative and

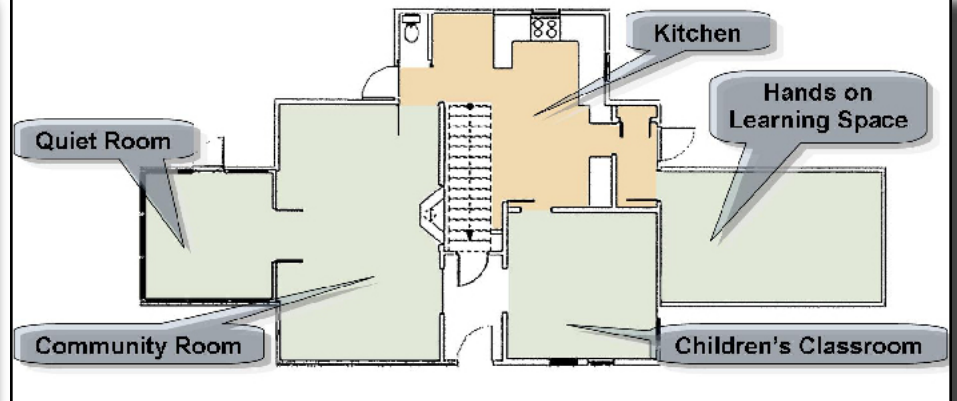


they were without fear in expressing themselves. Lori is extremely creative in the way she builds writing exercises that are both humorous and deep.

Now that school is back in session the After School Program has moved to Bev's House! As soon as all the children have arrived, we use the meeting room to eat a healthy snack together and talk about the plan for the afternoon. We have a quiet reading and homework room, and there are also two study spaces in the kitchen that are popular with children who like to have their own work areas. Upstairs there is a room for activities, games, and projects with a space for the program's two laptops and printer. For a long time we have needed a space where we could work with younger children in grades K-2 after school, as well as preschoolers during the mornings, and we are now able so upstairs in Bev's House.

- Daphne Klein, Children's Advocate

Bev's House First Floor Layout



Edible Perennial Landscape

On October 9th, 28 volunteers from Timken, Trumbell-Nelson, Dartmouth College, Ledyard Bank, and the Haven helped put our Edible Perennial Landscape to bed for the winter. Among many other things, they reinvigorated our soil by spreading compost onto our gardens which include two blueberry patches, apple, plum, and cherry trees, strawberries, asparagus, rhubarb, a pumpkin patch and two kitchen gardens.

The goal of our edible landscape effort is to create gardens that will produce food to support our Food Shelf and supplement meals for the guests who live in our Shelters. Thanks to the Master Gardeners of Vermont, James Lamontagne Landscaping Company, Haven guests & staff, and many community partners, our goal has been realized this first year!



GIVING TO THE HAVEN

Over 70% of the Haven's revenues come directly from individuals who make donations by check, credit card or gifts of stock.

We couldn't do it without you!

If the Haven raises \$300,000 in new or increased gifts for operations by December 1, 2011, Jane's Trust will make an additional gift of \$150,000.

New or increased gifts of \$50 to \$25,000 from INDIVIDUALS and \$150 to \$25,000 from BUSINESSES are eligible for the match.

BY MAIL

You can put a check in the mail! Don't forget, you can also pay by credit card and/or make a pledge payable over time.

ONLINE

You can donate easily by credit card online. Log on to www.uppervalleyhaven.org and follow the prompts.

PLEDGES

Pledges can be made to the Haven that can be paid over time. Your pledge commitment allows us to rely on future funding for more than just one fiscal year. If you'd like to make a pledge, please contact Liz Verney at liz@uppervalleyhaven.org or at (802) 478-1803.

RECURRING DEDUCTIONS

You can set up these payment options with your bank or other Bill Pay programs. Please feel free to call us if you need help getting started.

We realize there are many ways for you to fulfill your philanthropic goals besides gifts of cash. We welcome a discussion with you about gifts of securities, legacy giving, and more.

WANTED: LEADERS....

Would you like to be a Haven Leader? Learn more by coming to the Haven, taking a tour, and meeting with our Executive Director and Board President to explore ways you can engage in leadership giving and support.

For a limited time, YOUR GIFT TO THE HAVEN can be MATCHED!

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