



Next Coordinators' Meeting Time and Location Change

Eleven people, representing ten congregations, attended the last coordinators' meeting. The next meeting will be held on **Tuesday, March 13 at 6pm** at:

**Food Gatherers
1 Carrot Way
Ann Arbor, MI 48105**

We will receive an informative tour of Food Gatherers and possibly Avalon Housing's Carrot Way community center (located next door). This is a wonderful opportunity to learn about supportive housing, the deep connections between Alpha House and Food Gatherers, and how you can utilize this great resource during your host week.

Check out these websites for more information about Food Gatherers and Avalon Housing:

www.foodgatherers.org
www.avalonhousing.org/property_carrotway.htm

Order from Food Gatherers and Save!

Alpha House receives a weekly delivery of food from Food Gatherers for our families in the Follow-up program. Meal volunteers are welcome to place an order with Latania, the Shelter Coordinator, the week prior to their host week. The order will be delivered to Alpha House and the volunteer will be charged Food Gatherers' rock bottom price per pound. Meat is the most common item ordered by meal volunteers. Ordering from Food Gatherers can be a very inexpensive way to feed a large hungry group of Alpha House families and volunteers! Contact Heidi for more information.

12th Annual Gimme Shelter

The 12th annual Gimme Shelter fundraiser is Saturday, October 20. This is IHN's sole event to raise money for the families experiencing homelessness that we serve at Alpha House.

IHN Development Coordinator, Casey Frazee, is looking for dedicated volunteers to serve on Gimme Shelter committees. The committees are: **Sponsorship, Silent Auction, Food, and Ticket Sales.**

There are also volunteer opportunities the day of the event. If you or someone you know is interested in being part of a committee or volunteering the day-of, please contact Casey at [cfrazee@alphahouse-ihn.org](mailto:cfraczee@alphahouse-ihn.org) or call 822-0220 ext. 204. Casey would like to have the committees formed by the end of March.

Alpha House Program Highlight

The Follow-up Program

Families have the option to continue receiving support services for up to one year after they move out of Alpha House. The Follow-up Program helps ease the transition from shelter to home and assists families in successfully maintaining stable housing.

Facilitators work with follow-up families on issues such as budgeting, childcare, employment, healthcare, crisis management, and legal issues. Follow-up families also receive a weekly delivery of groceries. Food items are provided by Food Gatherers and delivered to follow-up families by Alpha House BSW interns from Eastern Michigan University.

Appreciation for Joel Eckel

Several congregation coordinators are organizing a collective expression of appreciation for former Alpha House Volunteer Coordinator, Joel Eckel. Coordinators and volunteers are invited to donate money for the purchase of a gift for Joel to honor his six years of hard work and dedication to IHN. Joel will be presented with the gift at the annual spring volunteer celebration. Individuals are also encouraged to submit a letter of thanks to Joel to be included in a scrapbook.

Please contact **Sally Lamkin (663-0300)** or **Susan Greenberg (761-3253)** to make a donation, submit a letter or if you would like to help. Please make donations by **Friday, March 16.**

Special Project Host Week Volunteers

Alpha House and our families often have last minute needs that come up throughout the week. Do you know of anyone in your congregation with flexible availability or special skills that may be willing to be

called if needs arise during your host week? If so, please include their name, phone number, and services they are willing to provide along with your host week volunteer schedule.

Common needs include:

- Transportation to/from appointments (in IHN van)
- Transportation for children to/from day camp during school breaks (in IHN van)
- Minor building repairs/ maintenance
- Help families move into housing

2006 Alpha House Statistics

The following is a brief list of statistics regarding families served at Alpha House in 2006. These numbers were presented at the last coordinators' meeting by IHN Executive Director, Julie Steiner.

- 33 families received services at Alpha House including 52 children
- 13 families who participated in the follow-up program remained in stable housing for at least six months after leaving the program
- Length of stay in shelter:
 - Less than 1 month, 5 families
 - 1-2 months, 22 families
 - 3 months or more, 7 families
- Destination after Alpha House:
 - Rental house or apartment, 7 families
 - Public housing, 5 families
 - Transitional housing, 5 families
 - Moved in with family or friends, 6 families
 - Emergency shelter, 1 family
- 87% of the follow-up program participants met at least one educational or employment goal within 6 months
- 97% of the children who participated in Children's Support Groups were able to identify at least one new feeling and demonstrate how to express it safely
- 3 families were assisted with obtaining their appropriate TANF funds
- Alpha House served many individuals with special needs including:
 - 6 who had experienced domestic violence
 - 3 with mental health needs
 - 3 with physical disabilities
 - 2 with alcohol use concerns
 - 2 with drug use concerns
- 9 individuals secured employment while at Alpha House

Emergency Volunteers Needed

Do you ever hear volunteers or members of your congregation mention that they wish they could be involved with Alpha House more often? Encourage them to have their name added to the Emergency Volunteer List! This is an easy way to stay connected to Alpha House throughout the year without making a big commitment.

Emergency Volunteers state which shifts they are interested in (meals, overnight, activities, weekends) and agree to be called if/when there is a last minute opening. Individuals on the list are certainly not obligated to volunteer if they receive a call. Maintaining a large pool of potential Emergency Volunteers ensures that we will always be able to find someone willing and able to fill in.

Those interested in adding their name to the list should contact Heidi.

Making the Most of Leftovers

Weekend lunches are a great time to use up any of the week's leftover food. Weekend lunch volunteers (or any meal volunteer!) can call ahead or visit Alpha House in advance to see what is available for their use. In addition, we often have frozen meals tucked away and if staff know in advance, they can start thawing the food so that it is ready in time.

Using leftovers creatively helps us cut down on waste and makes the most of our precious resources. All leftovers should be labeled, dated, and used within 3 days (within 6 months if frozen).

Coordinators' Meeting

2007 Schedule

Tuesday, March 13
6pm at Food Gatherers

Thursday, May 17
7pm at Alpha House

Tuesday, July 17
7pm at Alpha House

Thursday, September 06
7pm at Alpha House

Tuesday, November 13
7pm at Alpha House

Questions, concerns, ideas?

Please don't hesitate to contact Volunteer Coordinator

Heidi Beck, MSW

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