

COORDINATING TIMES

October 2007

September Coordinators Meeting

Thirteen people attended the recent Coordinators Meeting held September 6th at Alpha House. Agenda items included:

- Gimme Shelter ticket sales & publicity**
- Homelessness Awareness Week**
- Review 2008 draft host schedule**
- Answering difficult questions**
- Evening of Giving**
- New staff introductions**

Every effort will be made to create a schedule that works for everyone. 2008 is already shaping up to be a fantastic year!

Please read more about each of these topics in the following pages. Hope to see you at the November meeting!

Next Coordinators Meeting:
Tuesday, November 13
7pm at Alpha House

Homelessness Awareness Week:

November 11-17

Once again, IHN will be participating in The National Coalition for the Homeless annual National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week. During this week, local communities will join a nationwide effort to bring greater awareness to the problems of hunger and homelessness.

Stay tuned for more information about how your congregation can participate in the following ways:

- Post materials about homelessness (provided by Alpha House)
- Incorporate issues of hunger and homelessness into clergy messages and adult and children's religious school classes
- Collect items or dollars to donate to Alpha House
- Attend a Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week gathering



2008 Host Schedule

Please review the draft of the 2008 Host Schedule (pages 7-9) and let Heidi know as soon as possible if you have any concerns or are not comfortable with the dates your congregation is scheduled for.



Answering Difficult Questions

As IHN coordinators, you are often looked to by your congregation for answers about Alpha House, our families, and volunteering at the shelter. You are also the go-to people for volunteers if they have frustrating or confusing experiences while volunteering at Alpha House. We value each coordinator's keen insight, understanding, and knowledge of IHN programs and the experiences of our families. However, many coordinators have expressed that sometimes they don't always know how to respond to particularly difficult questions asked by volunteers.

Please read the list of difficult questions and their responses on page 5. We are deeply grateful for your willingness to be a link between members of your congregation and Alpha House and to help volunteers have a meaningful, thought-provoking service experience. Please let Heidi know if there are additional questions you would like to see added to this list

Evening of Giving at Briarwood Mall

IHN is participating in Briarwood Mall's *Evening of Giving* to be held on **Sunday, November 18 at 6:30 p.m.** This fundraising event is designed to benefit local nonprofit organizations and is scheduled for the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Ticket holders will receive Day-After-Thanksgiving style sales deals at most Briarwood stores without having to fight mobs of shoppers. Tickets are \$25. IHN will receive \$20 directly and the other \$5 will go to the Simon Foundation, the charitable arm of Simon Inc., which owns Briarwood Mall.

To purchase tickets, contact Casey Frazee, IHN Development Coordinator, at 822-0220 or cfrazee@alphahouse-ihn.org.

New Staff Introductions

We recently said good-bye to one of our long-time Shelter Aides, Chandra Poley. Chandra became a full-time graduate student this fall. We will miss her and wish her the best of luck in her next adventure!

Patrice Resinger hardly needs an introduction! Patrice is a former IHN Congregation Coordinator, volunteer, and weekend Shelter Aide. Patrice assumed the fulltime evening



Gimme Shelter 2007!

Ticket Sales

The 12th annual Gimme Shelter fundraiser is **Saturday, October 20th at 6:30 p.m.** at Washtenaw Community College. Each year, we look to Congregation Coordinators to help sell tickets to this 500-person event that features both live and silent auctions, live performances by The RFD Boys and fabulous food! This year, we hope to raise \$100,000 for IHN at Alpha House. That's just shy of 1/6 of our entire annual operating budget! You can help by taking anywhere from 2 to 50+ tickets to sell to your friends, family, co-workers and members of your congregation. Tickets are \$40 in advance and \$45 at the door. Children 6-years-old and younger are free.

For tickets, contact **Margaret Gaugler, Gimme Shelter Ticket Sales Chair**, at 663-8901 or gaugler@juno.com. See the attached informational letter about the event for more information.

Publicity Ideas


Gimme Shelter is just around the corner! Help us spread the word about this fun and vitally important event. The following list contains ideas generated by coordinators about publicizing Gimme Shelter in their congregations. Please let us know if you have ideas to add!

- Post the attached flyer throughout your congregation's building (and any where else you are able to!)
- Check to be sure there is an announcement in your congregation's newsletter/ weekly bulletin (contact Casey at Alpha House you don't see an announcement)
- Set up a table during the coffee hour to sell tickets and encourage people to attend
- Carry tickets with you to entice friends, family, classmates, small group members, etc.
- Give purchased tickets to volunteers as a reward for their service
- Persuade your congregation to buy a block of tickets

Hope to see you on October 20th!

Shelter Aide position and will likely be the first person volunteers meet when they come through the Alpha House doors! Patrice brings a

wealth of knowledge and skills to her work in addition to a deep appreciation of the IHN community. Welcome Patrice!

Important Reminders 
For Children's Activity Volunteers

Children's Activity Volunteers give the marvelous gift of respite to Alpha House parents during a very stressful time in their lives. Any parent or anyone who has cared for children can appreciate the power and importance of this special gift. However, many of our families (both parents and children) have experienced or witnessed various forms of trauma. These experiences can make it difficult for parents to entrust their children to new people and can create added challenges for children in social settings.

This list of important reminders for activity volunteers is intended to ensure that volunteers are prepared for their role and activity time is safe and enjoyable for children and adults alike! Please make sure your activity volunteers are aware of the following:

- All volunteers should wear a name tag

Coordinators Meetings

2007 Schedule
Tuesday, November 13

2008 Schedule
Thursday, January 17
Tuesday, March 18
Thursday, May 22
Tuesday, July 22
Thursday, September 18
Tuesday, November 18

All meetings: 7pm at Alpha House unless otherwise noted

ntees should introduce themselves to parents prior to activity time

- Please double check that all children have received their parents permission to participate in activity time
- A minimum of two adults (over 18yrs) is required to supervise children outside, in the basement, or in the living room
- Inform staff immediately if children get hurt (even minor scrapes), have

conflicts, start crying, ask for their parents, or have other issues of concern

- Only the child's parent may assist the child in the restroom. Please tell a staff member (or the parent) if a child needs help with restroom tasks
- Know the whereabouts and activities of all children under your care
- Ask for help! Volunteers should inform a staff member immediately if they feel uncomfortable about a situation, are unsure of their responsibilities, or have questions or concerns
- Alpha House staff and parents love activity volunteers!! We want these special volunteers to know that they are deeply appreciated by all!!!

Needed at Alpha House



With chilly weather right around the corner, Alpha House is in need of the following items to help keep our families warm, dry and comfortable.

New Underwear:

All male and female adult and children's sizes!

New Socks:

All male and female adult and children's sizes!

Warm Blankets:

New or gently used but in great condition!

Umbrellas

New or gently used but in great condition!

Alpha House does not need any hats, scarves or mittens at this time.

If possible, please let your congregation know of these immediate needs. Thank you for your leadership and efforts to help your congregation stay connected to our families all year long! We are grateful!!

Questions, concerns, ideas?

Please contact Volunteer Coordinator
Heidi Beck, MSW

Interfaith Hospitality Network at Alpha House

4290 Jackson Road

Ann Arbor, MI 48103

Phone: 734-822-0220

Fax: 734-822-0226

www.alphahouse-ihn.org

hbeck@alphahouse-ihn.org

LETTER TO GIMME SHELTER TICKET SELLERS



Greetings Ticket Seller!

It's that "Gimme Shelter" time of year! Last year's event raised nearly \$80,000 for IHN at Alpha House to provide a safe place for children and families experiencing homelessness within our community. This year we hope to reach our goal of 100 Grand at the October 20 Gimme Shelter. This event is Alpha House's biggest fundraiser (and only fundraising event) and it is extremely important in continuing the great work that goes on every day. How are we going to reach our goal of 100 Grand? Well, to reach our goal, "Super Star Ticket Sellers" like you and I will have to sell out the venue, 500 tickets. I have faith in you that you will be able to sell your allotted tickets and get some monetary donations too.

Enclosed is your "Super Star Ticket Seller Packet." It includes:

- _ Fact Sheet
- _ Individual Ticket Sales sheet
- _ Congregation-specific flyers (fill in the blanks with your contact information)
- _ General publicity flyers
- _ Return envelope for sales sheet and money
- _ Your tickets

Here are a few notes to keep in mind:

- _ Make sure that forms are completely filled out, including name, address, city & zip
- _ Have buyers fill out the name portion of their tickets and leave them attached. They will be used for the Silent Auction at Gimme Shelter
- _ Tickets are \$40, children 6-years-old and under are free and do not require a ticket
- _ We accept cash and checks, make checks payable to IHN

Thank you so much for the work you do! Because of you, IHN continues to shelter families in our community every day!

With gratitude,

Margaret

Margaret Gaugler
Ticket Sales Chair
Gimme Shelter
Phone: (734) 663-8901

Email: gaugler@juno.com

For Congregation Coordinators: **Answering Difficult Questions Asked by Volunteers**

I've heard that Alpha House always has a long waiting list, so why are there sometimes empty rooms at the shelter?

The volunteer may be feeling:

- Confused about the extent of homelessness and the needs of families in our community
- Concerned that it appears that Alpha House is not using its resources wisely
- Frustrated that there are not more residents to interact with
- Annoyed that they gave their time, energy, and/or resources when maybe it wasn't really needed

Response:

It's true, there are typically 20-30 families on the Alpha House waiting list at any given time. When a room becomes available, the IHN Shelter Coordinator begins the process of contacting wait-list families. Because the families on the waiting list are often living in unstable situations without easy access to a phone, it can be difficult to make contact with them. IHN has a policy of not giving up on people and allows time for messages to be relayed and calls to be returned before moving on to the next person on the waiting list. In addition, prospective families must go through an interview process to be sure Alpha House is appropriate for them. This also can take time to arrange when families are living in challenging circumstances. Often it is the families who are hardest to make contact with who are most in need of IHN services. We want to be sure we are making efforts to reach these vulnerable families.

Though we do our best to not let rooms sit empty, for these reasons sometimes rooms are not able to be filled immediately when families move out.

When I was volunteering, one of the residents told me about a need that they had. I would like to help this particular family with this need, what is the best way to do that?

The volunteer may be feeling:

- A strong personal connection with this particular resident
- Deeply moved by the resident's difficult situation
- Guilty about their own privilege and material possessions
- Excited that they are able to contribute something that they know will make a difference
- Inspired to do something more

Response:

Each Alpha House family enters the shelter program with their own unique set of strengths. Families are also challenged by a wide variety of barriers to housing. Each family is assigned a Facilitator when they arrive at Alpha House who coordinates the family's Wraparound Program (IHN's style of case management). With their Facilitator, the family develops a plan, sets goals, identifies needs, discusses past and present challenges, and establishes a process of accountability. It is important that families work in partnership with their Facilitators to meet their needs and address their barriers to housing. Families are asked not to solicit items directly from volunteers because of the potential to cause divisiveness among the families, undermine the Wraparound process and put future volunteers in an awkward position. Likewise, volunteers are asked not to give items directly to families for many of the same reasons. Volunteers who think they may be able to donate something that an Alpha House family could use are encouraged to speak with a staff member to determine the best way to utilize the resource.

When I was dropping off supplies, I saw many of the same items already at the shelter. Why was I asked to buy these items when it seems like Alpha House doesn't need them?

The volunteer may be feeling:

- Confused about the actual needs of Alpha House
- Concerned that it appears that Alpha House is not using its resources wisely
- Frustrated that they gave their time and resources in a way that may not have been needed
- Annoyed that it seems like Alpha House is disorganized

Response:

The needs of the shelter and our families are many, varied, and changing. Nearly everything used to maintain the shelter and by families living at Alpha House is provided by host congregations. It is a top priority of IHN staff to use precious resources wisely. The following list includes the main issues that affect what supplies are requested, how much is requested, and how quickly supplies are used:

- Some items are used heavily and are necessary to maintain a safe and clean environment. These items are requested in large quantities.
- There are times throughout the year when Alpha House is without a host congregation or the hosting congregation is not able to provide the full supply list. Therefore, Alpha House tries to maintain a surplus able to last a week or more.
- Families may move into housing or away from Alpha House with little advanced notice causing our numbers to drop and supplies to pile up for a few days.
- However, just as commonly, families may move into the shelter with little warning. For this reason, we need to have enough supplies on hand to accommodate a rise in numbers.

I was asked to prepare food for a certain number of people. However, when I arrived there was only a fraction of that number around to eat. Why was I told one number when in reality, the actual number was drastically different from that?

The volunteer may be feeling:

- Disappointed that there weren't more people present to enjoy their yummy food
- Confused about Alpha House's needs, policies and program structure
- Annoyed that it appears that Alpha House is disorganized
- Concerned that food might go to waste and that Alpha House may not be using resources wisely
- Frustrated that they may have wasted precious time and resources
- Taken advantage of

Response:

The evening meal is one of the most important and grounding components of the Alpha House program. In stressful circumstances, such as during the crisis of homelessness, good food becomes even more treasured and powerful. We are deeply grateful for the many volunteers who cook for Alpha House families with joy and love.

Families staying at Alpha House are asked to be present at dinner each evening. However, like most families, Alpha House families lead busy lives full of work, school, family, appointments, and attendance at religious services. In addition, many of our families work odd hours and have the added burden of getting around without reliable transportation. Families are excused from dinner attendance for qualified activities such as work, meetings, school events, etc. Families are asked to provide Alpha House with a schedule at the beginning of each week to help give us an idea of how many people to expect for dinner and evening activities. However, the unexpected frequently arises at Alpha House, often too late to allow meal volunteers to change their food preparation plans. Staff will be able to give an explanation of the evening's circumstances and direct volunteers on what to do with any leftovers.

2008 IHN Host Schedule: Draft

DATE	HOST	SUPPORT	SUPPORT	SUPPORT
Dec 31 - Jan 6	OPEN			
Jan 7 – Jan 13	First United Methodist church of Ypsilanti	Saturday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	Sunday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	JCS?
Jan 14 - Jan 20	West Side United Methodist Church			
Jan 21 - Jan 27	St. Mary Catholic Church			
Jan 28 - Feb 3	First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor	Beth Israel (Tuesday & Thursday)		
Feb 4 - Feb 10	Huron Hills Baptist Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Feb 11 - Feb 17	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints			
Feb 18 - Feb 24	First Presbyterian Church of Saline			
Feb 25 - Mar 2	First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor	Community of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)		
Mar 3 - Mar 9	Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Mar 10 - Mar 16	First United Methodist Church of Chelsea			
Mar 17 - Mar 23	NorthRidge			
Mar 24 – Mar 30	Dexter United Methodist Church			
Mar 31 - Apr 6	Ann Arbor Seventh-day Adventist Church & Shalom Community Church			
Apr 7 - Apr 13	St Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth			
Apr 14 - Apr 20	First Baptist Church of Ypsilanti			
Apr 21 – Apr 27	Huron Hills Baptist Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Apr 28 - May 4	First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor	Beth Israel (Tuesday & Thursday)		
May 5 - May 11	First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor			
May 12-May 18	First United Methodist Church of Ypsilanti	Saturday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	Sunday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	JCS?
May 19-May 25	NorthRidge			
May 26 - Jun 1	St. Paul Missionary Baptist Church			
Jun 2 - Jun 8	St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Jun 9 - Jun 15	St Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth			
Jun 16 - Jun 22	First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor	Community of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)		

2008 IHN Host Schedule: Draft

Jun 23 - Jun 29	First United Methodist Church of Chelsea			
Jun 30- Jul 6	St. Andrew Catholic Church			
Jul 7 - Jul 13	Dexter United Methodist Church			
Jul 14 - Jul 20	First Presbyterian Church of Saline			
Jul 21 - Jul 27	Huron Hills Baptist Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Jul 28 - Aug 3	Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church			
Aug 4 - Aug 10	Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints			
Aug 11 - Aug 17	St. Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth			
Aug 18 - Aug 24	First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor?	Beth Israel (Tuesday & Thursday)?	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)
Aug 25 – Aug 31	First Baptist Church of Ypsilanti			
Sept 1 - Sept 7	OPEN?			
Sept 9 - Sept 14	First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sun. dinner & activity)	
Sept 15 – Sept 21	West Side United Methodist Church			
Sept 22 – Sept 28	First United Methodist Church of Chelsea			
Sept 29 - Oct 5	First United Methodist Church of Ypsilanti	Saturday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	Sunday OPEN (Breakfast, lunch, activity 2-5)	JCS?
Oct 6 - Oct 12	Huron Hills Baptist Church	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Oct 13 - Oct 19	St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church			
Oct 20 - Oct 26	St. Paul Lutheran Church			
Oct 27 - Nov 2	St. Mary Catholic Church			
Nov 3 - Nov 9	Ann Arbor Seventh-day Adventist Church & Shalom Community Church			
Nov 10 - Nov 16	First United Methodist Church of Ann Arbor	Community of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)		
Nov 17 - Nov 23	First Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ann Arbor	Beth Israel (Tuesday & Thursday)		
Nov 24 – Nov 30	Dexter United Methodist Church			
Dec 1 - Dec 7	OPEN	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Dec 8 - Dec 14	First United Methodist Church of Chelsea			
Dec 15 - Dec 21	First Presbyterian Church of Ann Arbor			
Dec 22 - Dec 28	St. Clare of Assisi Episcopal Church & Temple Beth Emeth	Bethel United Church of Christ (Saturday dinner & activity)	Chelsea Free Methodist (Sunday dinner & activity)	
Dec 29 -Jan 4	OPEN			