

# THE FRONT PORCH NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF BETHANY HOUSE SERVICES

WINTER 2015

## We Have Grown!

Without a doubt, the **biggest change** in Bethany House's history occurred January 1, 2015, when BHS took over the operation of the Mercy Health – St. John Housing Program. Overnight, we grew from one shelter with 29 beds in Fairmount to a total of four shelter locations with the addition of three apartment buildings in Over-the-Rhine, Mt. Auburn and Walnut Hills. The additional 100 beds in these 21 apartments make Bethany House the largest family shelter in the community, providing half of all available beds for homeless families. **This year the number of guests we serve will more than triple.** After 31 years, BHS remains firmly committed to sheltering and empowering homeless families.

### WHY GROW?

At a time when the number of family shelter beds in Cincinnati is already inadequate to meet the needs of the growing numbers of homeless families, Bethany House has accepted the challenge to expand quickly.

The number of homeless children in the US has risen sharply in recent years to an all-time high of 2.5 million in 2013. This surge in family homelessness is described in the November 2014 report, "America's Youngest Outcasts," released by the National Center on Family Homelessness. The report attributes much of the increase to the current high rate of poverty, lack of affordable housing and the impact of domestic violence.

*Continued. See Grow on pg. 3*



### Wish List...for our new apartments!

We are renovating each apartment and need the following:

- Dressers
- Twin and double sheet sets, bedding, pillows
- Small refrigerators
- "This End UP" bunk beds
- New/gently used furniture, i.e.

- sofas, chairs, end tables, kitchen table and chairs, lamps, artwork
- Small appliances, dishes, silverware, glasses, pots & pans
- Baby beds

Please call Courtney at 513-557-2402 for delivery instructions.

### "Handy" Men and Women Wanted

We are looking for church groups, community groups, school groups, or company groups to help us clean and paint our shelters! No experience necessary—just hard workers with smiling faces who want to make a BIG difference in the lives of the families we serve. Please call Courtney Parker, Special Event/Volunteer Coordinator, at 513-557-2402.

# Dear Friends,



It truly is an exciting time at Bethany House—challenging yes, a little overwhelming at times—but also energizing and very fulfilling.

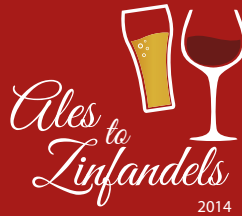
Taking on the Mercy Health – St. John emergency shelter operations was a great opportunity for Bethany House to expand services where we had the expertise and the capacity. Being rated #1 out of 12 local shelters this past August is proof of that, but even better proof is the staff's dedication and commitment. Every day I witness a selflessness like no other. I am truly amazed at the personal sacrifices that they make on behalf of our moms and kids. So while there is a bit of trepidation, we are strengthened with the knowledge that we can help our families become independent and self-sufficient.

**Each day, and especially throughout the holidays, our greatest inspiration comes from our generous donors and volunteers like you.** It is your commitment and your dedication to our families that changes the lives of each person who walks through our doors. Your generosity is what sustains us every day of the year, year after year.

**Please call me for a tour of our three new buildings** in Over-the-Rhine, Mt. Auburn and Walnut Hills or to visit Bethany Homes to see the improvements we've made since we took over the management in June or **to meet our new full time Mental Health Clinician** helping our families. I would love for you to see the impact of your support first hand!

Gratefully,

Susan S. Schiller  
Executive Director



## 2014 Ales to Zinfandels Raises Over \$30,000

A new venue—beautiful Memorial Hall—and new entertainment—The Ensemble Theatre Cincinnati—highlighted “Ales to Zinfandels,” BHS’s 11<sup>th</sup> annual wine tasting supporting Bethany House’s homeless families.

On November 6, 2014, 175 guests enjoyed fine wines and craft beers along with delicious appetizers from Funky’s Catering. Special thanks to Presenting Sponsors, Dave and Tracy Davis, Chair Julie Ross and Fox 19’s Tracey Johnson who emceed the program. We are grateful to our sponsors listed below and to everyone who supported this event helping to raise over \$30,000 for shelter operations.

### Presenting Sponsor

**Dave and Tracy Davis**

### Silver Sponsor



### Bronze Sponsors



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Mike and Megan McCuen

Anne and Doug Miller



### *Our sincere gratitude to the 2015 Wine Tasting Committee:*

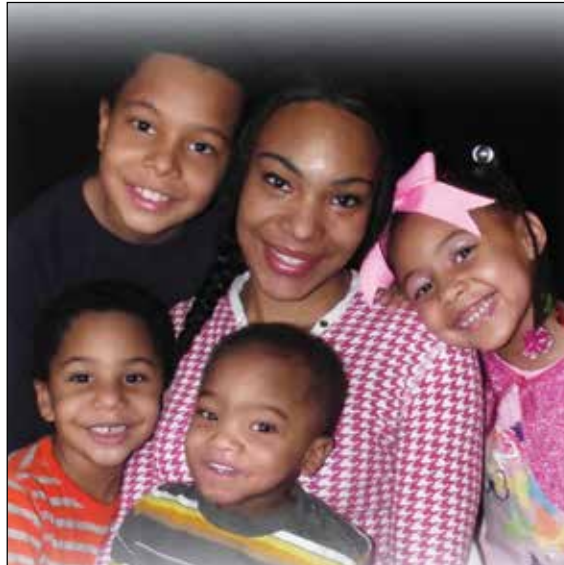
**Front L. to R.** Gail Myers, Mary Alice Koch, Julie Ross, Kelley Carrier, Beth Kasson  
**Back L. to R.** Tracey Griggs, Erika Judd, Megan McCuen, Chelsea Moeller  
**Not pictured:** Teddy Siegel, Michael McQueary, Hope Schmidt, Amanda Cawdrey, Sharron DiMario, Jackie Schaipe

# Help Secure Our Future With Your Planned Gift

Combining charitable giving with your estate and financial planning goals allows you to leave a legacy that will continue to impact the lives of others. Your planned gift to Bethany House Services will ensure the important work we do to help families become self-sustaining and independent continues for years to come. There are various ways to make a commitment to our mission in your estate plans:

- Naming Bethany House in Your Will or Trust
- Charitable Gift Annuity
- Retirement Fund Assets
- Life Insurance
- Charitable Lead Trust
- Real Estate
- Donor Advised Fund

For more information on Planned Giving, please call Terri Lessnau, Development Director, at 513-557-2411.



*Leaving a Legacy can help other homeless families like Talisha's who was in our shelter this past year.*

## Grow Continued from pg. 1

Locally, a July 2014 Cincinnati Enquirer article reported that Cincinnati is experiencing an unprecedented surge in the number of homeless families. The Cincinnati Partnership Center's annual report "Homelessness in Cincinnati – 2013" states that "Between 2012 and 2013 the Cincinnati/Hamilton County area lost 36 Emergency Shelter Beds..." Fewer beds mean more people sleeping on the streets. The report notes that changes in federal housing regulations resulted in a 4 percent increase in homelessness in our area from 2012 to 2013. The increase in the number of families experiencing homelessness is accompanied by a change in the severity of the situation. In past years, most families arrived at Bethany House from the homes of friends or relatives where they "doubled up"

for as long as possible. Beginning in 2014, families seem to be in greater distress and are coming to shelter directly from their cars, abandoned buildings, parks or the streets.

We anticipate that our annual number of sheltered guests will increase from 438 in 2014 to 1,300 homeless individuals in 2015 as we grow from 29 to 129 beds. It is expected that in 2015 we will serve at least 865 children under the age of 18; about 20 percent (173) of these children will be infants and toddlers under the age of two years. It has been our experience that although occasionally a mother and her teenaged child are guests at the shelter, the majority of our children are preschool and elementary school age, with an average age of six years.

## DINNERS AND BRUNCHES AT THE SHELTER

Volunteers are needed to prepare and serve dinners Monday through Thursday evenings and brunches on Saturday and Sunday. Joi Thompson, a BHS dinner volunteer from ALAC Outreach Ministry, sent us the following note recently —

*"The assistance provided to us each time we prepare and serve dinners to the guests is exceptional. The staff is wonderful and the guests are very welcoming. We look forward to continuing our service to Bethany House Services."*

BHS volunteers enrich the lives of our guests and provide an invaluable service to the agency. If you, your family, scout group or work group would like to learn about volunteer opportunities, please call Courtney Parker, Special Event/Volunteer Coordinator, at 513-557-2402.

## BETHANY WELCOMES NEW BOARD MEMBERS

Working to advance the independence and housing stability of homeless families, Bethany House is proud to announce the following new Board members:

**Jessica Bauml**, Employment Law Attorney with Jackson Lewis.

**Sharron DiMario**, Executive Director of Health Careers Collaborative.

**Albert Smitherman**, President and Owner of Jostin Construction.

# Generosity Abounds

The hustle and bustle of Christmas at Bethany House is truly inspiring! In fact, there were many a tear shed—by the givers and the receivers—as staff opened the door to accept toys, clothes, household items, and food! Our Santa’s Shop allowed every family we served in 2014 to shop for their children.

Our thanks to the many civic groups, area churches, community groups and individual donors who helped our families celebrate Christmas. If we missed your name, we apologize. To those Secret Santas who prefer to remain anonymous, we thank you!

- Amazon Fulfillment Center
- Bricker and Eckler, LLP

- Dutch’s Bar and Bottle Shop
- Cincinnati Children’s Hospital Medical Center
- City of Cincinnati Employees
- Duke Energy
- Envy Salon
- Fifth Third Bank
- Gameworks
- General Electric
- Good Shepherd Catholic Church
- Immaculate Heart of Mary Catholic Church
- Erika Judd and Siblings and Families
- Kristen Lawwill
- Our Lady of Lourdes Catholic Church
- Sandra Philpot

- Procter and Gamble
- Rhonda Smith & RockTenn
- St. Columban Church of Loveland
- TruGreen Chemlawn
- United Church of Christ
- Terri Williams and Family
- Two Men and a Truck
- University of Cincinnati-McMicken College of Arts and Sciences
- Marie Lillis and Family
- John and Shirley Groh and Family
- Mariann McDermott
- Mark Herrmann and Emily Cooper
- Leslie Miller
- Lanaye Peebles and Family
- LaRosa’s
- The Hobler Family
- Sheila Gilliam and Family
- Patrice Crocker

Our sincere thanks to **EVERYONE** who donated their time, talent and treasure to help our families have a very Merry Christmas!



▲ Thanks to the generosity of Leslie Miller, the kids in our shelter were treated to an evening at the Build-A-Bear Workshop in Kenwood Mall. Each child created his or her very own personalized stuffed animal, enjoyed dinner and even had a visit from old St. Nick!



▲ Volunteers Shunda Adams (left) and Brenda Woods from the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority Inc., Phi Psi Omega Chapter have helped wrap Christmas gifts at our Santa’s Shop for many years.



▲ Paris Butcher, Community Service Officer at Woodward High School (in conjunction with Cincinnati Youth Collaborative) and her teacher, Deborah Lehr, present a check to BHS from their holiday fundraiser.



▲ Longtime Volunteer Claire Rowekamp said it always amazes her how many nice groups give up their Friday or Saturday at the busiest time of the year to bring the Christmas spirit to the Bethany families.



▲ The staff and customers at Envy Salon in Bridgetown collected Christmas presents and canned goods to donate to our families.



▲ Bethany House families were the recipients of this year's City of Cincinnati's Employees Giving Tree. City employees donated Christmas gifts, household supplies and gift cards for our families! Thanks so much to the Mayor and Mrs. Cranley and all the city employees who generously donated!



▲ Cincinnati's First Lady Dena Cranley toured the shelter in December making plans for the City of Cincinnati's Employees Giving Tree benefiting Bethany House families. L. to R. Karen Johnson, Kymjetta Carr, Antoinette, First Lady Dena Cranley, April and her daughter Tekoa and Susan Schiller.



▲ The White Oak office of Two Men and A Truck generously donated the use of one of their trucks to store donations for our Santa's Shop.



▲ Board Member Terri Williams said bringing her team from Fifth Third's Treasury Management Area to help organize Santa's Shop was a great event combining Team Building, Community Service and Christmas Cheer!

## Appreciates and Celebrates our Volunteers!

Throughout 2014 Bethany House was blessed with many volunteers from our community donating their time and talents to support our mission and our work. They truly are an inspiration to our families and our staff. From special events to dinners, facilities to yard work, we celebrate our volunteers.



Thanks to volunteers from PNC for donating their time and talents at our shelter.



Volunteers celebrated Halloween with the children at the shelter.

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS

Stephen G. Brinker, Esq., *President*  
Denise D. Schumacher, *Vice President*  
Sue Dyer, *Treasurer*

### DIRECTORS

H. Kim Baird	Megan J. McCuen
Jessica E. Bauml	Sean G. Mullins
Douglas M. Boschert	M. Gail Myers
Lucy Crane	Kathrine R. Phillips
Sharron DiMario	Sharon C. Raess
Robert J. Inkrot	Albert C. Smitherman
Kirk M. Koppenhoefer	Terri L. Williams
Nadine Liggett	Calvin T. Wright

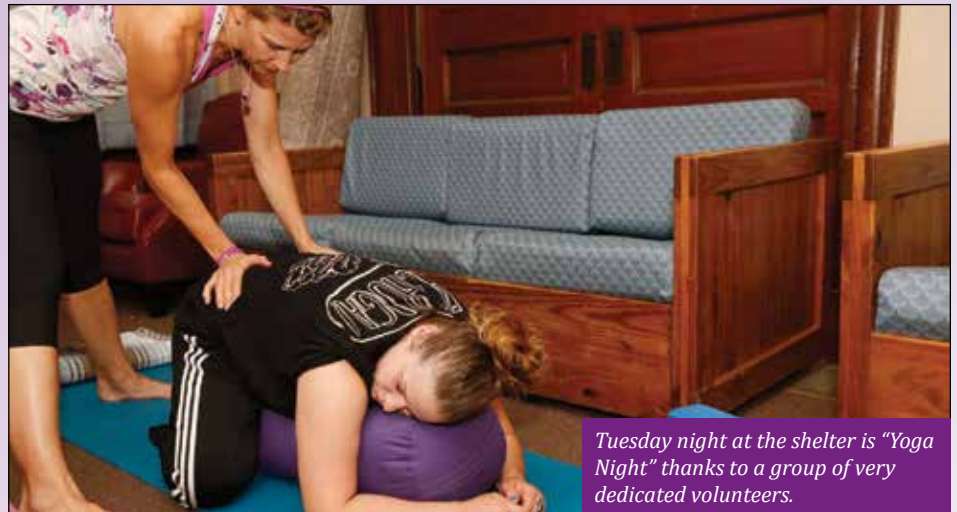
### LEADERSHIP TEAM

Susan S. Schiller, <i>Executive Director</i>	Gwendolyn M. Green, MED, LSW, <i>Shelter Director</i>
Kelly K. Freyler, <i>Finance Director</i>	Terri L. Lessnau, <i>Development Director</i>
Darlene D. Guess, MSOL, LSW, <i>Director of Client Programs</i>	

**OUR MISSION** Bethany House Services collaborates with others to provide a full range of housing, education and assistance programs to homeless families.

**OUR VISION** To end homelessness

**CORE VALUES** Hospitality, Human Dignity, Justice, Advocacy, Holistic Services, Collaboration and Safety



Tuesday night at the shelter is "Yoga Night" thanks to a group of very dedicated volunteers.



Bonnie Anderson and Marcia Powell delivered winter hats, scarves, mittens and gloves handmade by the women from Mt. Washington United Methodist Church.

# Grants Target Needs of Families

Foundation funding in 2014 helped bridge the gap between the cost of the services Bethany provides and the amount of the government contracts we receive to provide those services.

Some grants fund our children's programming, which provides age-appropriate activities designed to prevent injuries and abuse and to instill lifelong habits such as healthy food choices and exercise. Other grants support our Life Skills classes for mothers, which provide them with basic knowledge and skills for living independently such as financial literacy, budgeting, resume writing, nutrition, and yoga. Other grants support the transition of a family from shelter to home by assisting with relocation expenses. All grant funding is extremely important to ensure brighter futures for homeless families!

We are extremely grateful to the following foundations for their support in 2014:

- Stella M. Buerger Charitable Trust
- Chemed Foundation
- Charles H. Dater Foundation
- Robert A. and Marian K. Kennedy Charitable Trust
- Al. Neyer, Inc. Foundation
- Agnes Nordloh Charitable Trust
- Robert H. Reakirt Foundation, PNC Bank, Trustee
- August A. Rendigs Jr. and Helen J. Rendigs Foundation
- TJX Foundation
- Maxwell Weaver Foundation

## Volunteer Spotlight:

### Gail Myers

Bethany House Services has been blessed with many great volunteers in their 31 year history and Gail Myers is one of those stalwarts. "Gail's expertise and creativity in public relations and marketing have been invaluable to BHS over the years. She is ready and willing to help us on each and every project," shared Susan Schiller, Executive Director.



Gail joined the Board of Directors in 2010. She serves as chair of the marketing committee and is a member of the executive committee. She donates hundreds of hours every year helping staff publicize the agency's work and its fundraisers. "She is never more than a phone call away and she freely offers her help and advice," said Development Director Terri Lessnau.

When asked why she has shared so much of her time and talent over the years she replied, "I was taught at an early age that giving to others, both time and money, was an important part of Christian service. I was introduced to Bethany by a friend and immediately fell in love with its work and its mission, and the dedication I saw in the employees and volunteers. Bethany changes lives every day, and it is my privilege to support its work in any way that I can."

Bethany House thanks Gail for her commitment to ensuring a safe haven for homeless families.

## MEMORIALS AND TRIBUTES SUPPORT BETHANY HOUSE MISSION

Bethany House Services Memorials and Tributes allow you to express your support, respect, gratitude or love through a gift that honors an individual while furthering the mission of Bethany House Services. Gifts can be made in celebration of a special event, such as a birthday or anniversary, in honor of an achievement or in memory of a loved one.

When your gift is received, an acknowledgement will be sent in your name to the individual you are honoring or the family of the person remembered. All gifts will also be acknowledged in the Bethany House newsletter.

**Memorials and Tributes received October 1, 2014 through January 31, 2015**

### IN MEMORY OF

**Gale Atkins**

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Lacy

**Harry Averbek**

Mr. Robert Woltering

**Jill Brown**

Eileen Brown

**Joan Cardosi**

Mr. John F. Cardosi

**Anne Collins-Kerry**

Mr. Jeffrey Wadelin

**Mary Lee Davis**

Mrs. Jean N. Inkrot

**Kevin and Mary Friedrich**

Mr. and Mrs. Nathan Ritchey

**Anna Gettelfinger**

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Gettelfinger

**Charles Gettelfinger**

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Gettelfinger

**James Gettelfinger**

Mr. and Mrs. Earl Gettelfinger

**Paul "Whitey" Halloran**

Mr. William P. Butler

Mr. and Mrs. J. David

Rosenberg

Ms. Joann M. Weber

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Anderson

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**Mary Ellen Joyce**

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Joyce

**Peggy Joyce**

Mr. and Mrs. James E. Joyce

**William and Peggy Joyce**

Mr. John Joyce

**Bob Lillis**

Marie Lillis

**Longo Family**

Sr. Marianne Longo

**Jerry and Joan Massa**

Mr. and Mrs. Douglas Massa

**Jerry Massa**

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Bartish

**Elizabeth Matthews**

Society of Transfiguration

**Allie Meckstroth**

Mr. Mark W. Weber and

Von Lehman & Company, Inc

**Adam Meyer (Santa)**

Marie Lillis

**Marcella Ringer**

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Mr. Russell B. Naber and

Ms. Pam Senefeld

**Erwin Stock**

Stock Insurance Agency

**Toni Williams**

Mr. and Mrs. Edward Faylo

**Kathleen Vogelpohl**

Mr. and Mrs. Michael Schiller

**"Mom, Dad and Don"**

Sally Wetenkamp

**"Priscilla, James and Terry"**

Sandra L. Thompson

### IN HONOR OF...

**Dr. David Barron**

Mr. and Mrs. C. Lawrence

Lockett

**Steve Brinker**

Ms. Lydia Brinker

**Jannet Brownfield**

Mr. and Mrs. Matthew

Brownfield

**Todd Bucholtz Birthday**

Ms. Maria R. Mitchell

**Wally and Jackie Carroll**

Mr. and Mrs. David Wempe

**Debbie Chapman**

Mr. Jim Murray

**Sr. Margie Efke**

Mr. and Mrs. Michael P.

Cussen

**Joyce Ferrell**

Ms. Mary D. Schweitzer

**Sr. Virginia Froehle**

Mr. and Mrs. Kenneth P.

Ganote

**Betty Gooten**

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Delle C. Jones

**Dr. and Mrs. Robert Heidt, Jr**

Ms. Ann Heidt

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**Jeni Leugers**

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Leugers

**Daun Lameier**

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Johanne M. Armstrong

**Steinle Sisters**

Mr. and Mrs. Louis R. Lauber

**Thomas and JoAnn Teague**

Mr. and Mrs. Jeremy J. Borsky

**Denise Schumacher**

Joni Schroeder

**Shirley Young**

Ms. Mary D. Schweitzer

# BETHANY HOUSE SERVICES

Bethany House Services  
1841 Fairmount Avenue  
Cincinnati, OH 45214  
513-921-1131  
[www.bethanyhouseservices.org](http://www.bethanyhouseservices.org)



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# SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC



MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR  
**MONDAY, AUGUST 3**

FOR THE 22<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL GOLF CLASSIC SUPPORTING  
BETHANY HOUSE.

Do you enjoy golf?  
Do you like to volunteer?  
Do you want to help the homeless families in our community?

If you answered **"Yes"** to any one of these questions, please contact Terri Lessnau at 513-557-2411 or [tlessnau@bhsinc.org](mailto:tlessnau@bhsinc.org). We are looking for sponsors, golfers and volunteers to help make this year's golf outing our most successful one yet!

If your company is interested in a sponsorship or you and your friends are interested in playing, please call Terri Lessnau at 513-557-2411.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call Courtney Parker at 513-557-2402.

Plan to join us at beautiful Maketewah County Club on August 3!