

... CONTINUED FROM FRONT

A report by the Corporation for Permanent Housing (CPH) declares, "A clean, dry, safe home reduces exposure to harsh weather, communicable diseases, infections, injury, harassment and violence; it provides a secure place to sleep and store food, clothing and medications; and it is essential to promoting personal hygiene and recuperation from illness."

In essence, permanent housing is better than shelter, and by far more desirable.

In 2017, VMC assisted eighty-seven (87) individuals to secure permanent housing. Their bitter cold nights were experienced in a dry, clean, safe, and warm place of their own. That's what everyone wants to come in to.

HELP SOMEONE HOME THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

What is Planned Giving? Simply, it is the transfer of assets to a designated nonprofit organization during a person's lifetime or as part of an estate plan. This forward thinking approach to giving is "planned" because often these assets are not liquid, have tax consequences, and are generally transferred via a will or other written means.

The impact of a Planned Gift to the Volunteer Ministry Center provides sustainability so VMC will be around years from now serving the community. And, it assures that the issues you care about now and the values you cherish will be long remembered.

Whether your gift is made through a designation in your will or trust, or as a beneficiary of your IRA or a bank account, you can be assured that your gift will have a significant impact and will provide a firm future for VMC to continue to change lives of the homeless and poor by opening doors for a better tomorrow!

If you would like additional information on Planned Giving, please contact the VMC Development Department at 865-524-3926x229.

Carry the Torch
APRIL 11, 2018 KNOXVILLE

The Volunteer Ministry Center Celebrates The Tenth Anniversary Of Carry The Torch Knoxville



Featuring Author of The Hundred Story Home

Kathy Izard

Wednesday, April 11, 2017
10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Knoxville Convention Center

Mission Fair 10:00 am - 11:45 am

Lunch and Program 11:45 am - 1:00 pm

Book Signing 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

Event Special Guest Artist Anne Neilson



Honorary Chair
Ginny Weatherstone

For additional information contact Mary Beth Ramey at 524-3926 x 229 or visit carrythetorchknoxville.com.

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VOLUNTEER MINISTRY CENTER
VMC
Opening Doors for a Better Tomorrow
The Journey Home
www.vmcinc.org

"BUT I DON'T WANT TO COME IN!"



During one of the early days of winter this year, as you may recall, the temperature dipped to single digits and seemed to linger there for a few days. It was during one of those days that a local television station featured a gentleman who was enduring the biting chill. Despite the harsh cold, if not potentially harmful cold, the man continued to "camp" outside. He described how he layered his clothing, used cardboard or a tarp to protect him from the wind and admitted that on occasions a fire was started.

The resourcefulness and the resilience of this gentleman is obvious, but why? Why stay out in the cold? When asked by the interviewer why he did not seek shelter, his reply was astonishing, "But I don't want to come in!" His answer seems to be somewhat irrational and thoughtless, if not dangerous.

In discussing the interview with a colleague, she had an excellent insight. She said, "What he said is not what he means." She explained that when some folks remain in the cold, saying they do not want to come inside, what is being said is rather rational. "Yes, I do want to come inside—but not inside a shelter." For some individuals, the large crowds overwhelm them, or the restrictions are too confining. In an NPR interview years ago, a man who was homeless explained why he did not come inside to a shelter, "All I can say is that my fear of the unknown, of what might be waiting for me at that shelter, was worse than my fear of the known risk, you know, of staying out on the street. That was where I was comfortable. And I think people, we're creatures of habit. We get comfortable in the most uncomfortable positions, and that just becomes home." No matter how welcoming or inviting, the shelter is just too problematic. Too problematic, no matter how rational or irrational the reason may be to remain outside.

This reminds me of one of our present residents who lives at Minvilla Manor. Scott (not his real name) would often be found asleep or resting on a park bench in the downtown area in the middle of snow, ice or the bitter cold. Not willing to come in out of the cold. After a few months of engaging him, however, one of our case managers discovered that Scott had a phobia of crowds and a physical abnormality in that he could not feel the cold temperatures. The case manager, after many more months of engaging Scott, convinced him of the value of having his own place and he has been a resident with VMC for over ten years.

My colleague's insight implies that the gentleman on the television means to say, "Yes, I would love to come inside, inside to a place of my own."

What an insight! And it makes sense.

continued inside...

WE HAVE A HOME NOW!



Georgeann holds the key to her new apartment presented by Resource Center Director Vanessa Hensley.



Tommy is all smiles as he opens the door to his new apartment.



Robbin, pictured with his case manager Dyrll Higdon, proudly displays his class completion certificate as well as his key to his new apartment.



William worked with his case manager, Katlyn Gass, and now has his own place to call home.

P.O. Box 325
Knoxville, TN 37901-0325
865-524-3926
VOLUNTEER MINISTRY CENTER
VMC
Opening Doors for a Better Tomorrow



FROM THE CEO'S DESK: "I CAN COUNT TO ONE THOUSAND"



Bruce W. Spangler, CEO

I remember my excitement in the first grade when I found out that I was going to learn how to read and count.

I was really excited about the possibilities that could be open to me once I learned the code on how to translate the letters into words on a page, in a book, or the newspaper. To date myself, I was taught from the old "Dick and Jane" books, long before the digital age. One of the first lines that is etched into the recesses of my mind is "See Spot run." Absolutely riveting prose with a plot that took me to many places. Once mastering the sentence, I declared "I can read!"

Counting took on an obsession with me. Learning to count, especially nickels and dimes, was a sport much more profitable than baseball. Counting on paper was not as much fun. Recalling an assignment to count to 1,000, I took on

the task with little excitement. Being a dutiful student, however, I took my number two pencil to paper and started off to uncharted waters.

It took me some time to get there, but I did. Upon finishing, I declared "I can count to one thousand."

Since 2007, VMC's programming emphasis shifted from "managing" the experience of homelessness to ending homelessness.

Utilizing a philosophy or strategy called "Housing First," we began to assist individuals in finding, securing, and sustaining permanent housing. Instead of the common practice of emergency and transitional sheltering, the Housing First approach is based on the need to first obtain stable housing and once secured, the other issues that may or have affected the household can and should be addressed. Housing in essence is a "tool for recovery" as opposed to a reward or "carrot."

Through the support of the Resource Center and the advocacy of a housing case manager, an individual experiencing homelessness is assisted in navigating the "system" to secure housing. VMC never "places" a person into housing. It is and always will be that the individual makes that choice. They choose to have housing.

As opposed to pencil to paper, we have been keeping count with the aid of a spreadsheet on our computers. As of February 1, 2018, VMC has assisted 970 individuals into housing since January 2007. In addition, 92-94% have maintained housing for a year or longer.

Sometime in the spring, VMC will have reached the number 1,000, the 1,000th person to achieve housing.

Housing First works! Your support insures that it works! Thank you!

Peace,

Rev. Bruce W. Spangler
Chief Executive Officer

BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2018

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HOMELESSNESS IS UNACCEPTABLE IN OUR COMMUNITY

Volunteer Ministry Center is dedicated to Ending and Preventing Homelessness in Knoxville and Knox County, Tennessee

With a clinical model that is client centered, homelessness and near homelessness are problems that can be solved, not just managed.

Rooted in Compassion, Caring, Helpful, Knowledgeable, Competent, Forward Thinking, Collaborative, Stable, Bold, Effective, and Efficient

Compassion

Treat all with dignity and respect, demonstrating equal care for all with cultural competency.

Those crossing the VMC threshold are, first and foremost, neighbors.

Every person has the right of self-determination.

The use of compassion improves the standards of care and most importantly, enhances the experience for the neighbor.

Staff members are persistent, patient and hopeful, empowered with clinical knowledge and insights.

Compassion must have a context and that context is accountability.

Accountability

Dignity and respect are found and reclaimed in an environment of accountability.

Neighbors are responsible for their own choices and lives.

All exchanges are as "adult to adult" without patronizing.

Neighbors are responsible for creating and fulfilling their plans with the aid of their assigned case manager.

All case plans are mutually agreed to by neighbor and case manager.

Boundaries are respected and enforced.

Results

Positive results occur in the context of best practices as defined by empirical evidence.

VMC's evidence based theory of change is "Housing First."

Housing First is "an approach to quickly and successfully connect individuals and families experiencing homelessness to permanent housing without preconditions and barriers to entry, such as sobriety, treatment or service participation requirements," HUD.

Many times, a little assistance at the right time helps a family sustain their housing.

VMC is a community leader in the Housing First approach with over three decades of experience in providing homeless services to individuals and families while offering (1) the largest number of permanent supportive housing units available, (2) a comprehensive dental health care clinic for individuals experiencing homelessness, (3) the only community transitional day shelter assisting individuals in the achievement of permanent housing, and (4) utility/rent assistance for family households to sustain housing.

Volunteer Ministry Center 2017 in Review



Housing

- 87 individuals moved into a permanent residence; 28 of those were formerly chronically homeless
- Housing Retention Rate since June 2007 is 93.8%



Resource Center

- 749 individuals received services
- 24,701 meals were served
- 5,292 volunteer hours
- 391 classes offered

30TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION!



The Resource Center was full of guests attending the 30th Anniversary Celebration.

Fred Perkinson, 2017 Chairman of the Board, shreds the Note on the VMC Building.



Charlie Daniel, long-time member of the VMC Board, shares the timeline of VMC's History.

Our delicious Celebration Cake was made by Karen Sproles.

VMC HAPPENINGS



Board member Jim Ford leads an enthusiastic line dancing class in the VMC Resource Center.

Marquet proudly shows his Certificate of Completion for one of the many classes offered in the VMC Resource Center.



Bo Townsend and Ed Peterson cooked up a fabulous lunch for members of the VMC Resource Center.

Remote Area Medical volunteers, Dr. Paul Wittke and his wife, Sheila, provide eye exams on a regular basis at VMC.



Members of West End Church of Christ delivered Christmas pillowcases stuffed with goodies to the residents of Minvilla Manor.

The staff of Miller Drozdowski provided a delightful holiday dinner and Christmas party for the residents of Minvilla Manor.



Bush Family Refuge

- 2,813 people served
- 516 homeless prevention services
- 4,146 volunteer hours



Minvilla Manor

- 65 residents lived in Minvilla Manor in 2017
- 9,111 recorded supportive services



Dental Clinic

- 1,501 patient visits
- 425 volunteer hours
- 2,423 dental procedures

