



NIGHT IN A CAR Inspiring Change

On February 3, Home Sweet Home Ministries and Trinity Lutheran Church introduced a new approach to raise awareness of homelessness by hosting *Night In A Car*. Over 50 participants including individuals, families, and church groups braved the cold to see if they could survive in their cars for one night.

With the gracious support of the community, we raised over \$25,000! Even though the night only provided a small glimpse into homelessness, it was a real eye opener for many participants. We caught up with a few of our survivors the morning after:

*"Your first reaction is that you want to get out of your car and into your house. **You feel very helpless** because you're in a small car and you can only really do so much," shares Eric Hoss, as he attempted to stay comfortable. "Obviously, you get cold so what you have to do is constantly try to keep warm. It's a real struggle. I've done it once, one day, and I can only imagine what people go through every day."*

*"**It's got to be really hard to live in your car with kids.** Honestly, I don't know how you could do it. Living in your car with at least as many kids as we have just isn't an option, not a realistic one," affirms Cecily Muska-Exner, after she survived the night in her minivan with her husband and five kids.*

*"**For me it was a very isolating experience, a very humbling experience, because I was alone.***

It was dark and all I could think about was getting through the night to see the light of day," says Daniel Burmeister, who was inspired to get involved and make a difference.

"I've never been so thankful for all the blessings in my life – a warm bed, a shower, and a roof over my head," claims Pastor Paul Stroup of Second Presbyterian Church.

*"**It really opened my eyes to see just how blessed we are,** and hopefully it will encourage us to be able to reach out and help."*



*"At 1:30 in the morning I didn't feel my nose," reveals Luke Filosa, who spent the night in his car with three others. **"It was so cold.** I don't know how somebody could get up and then go to work, so God bless them."*



We look forward to growing *Night In A Car* next year. If your group or church would be interested in getting involved, please contact our Donor Relations Coordinator, Ashley Souk, at 309-828-7356.

MISSION STATEMENT

Home Sweet Home Ministries demonstrates Christ's love through innovative approaches that instill hope, restore lives, and build community.



A Message from Mary Ann

"And who is my neighbor?" - Luke 10:29

This question is asked and answered every day at Home Sweet Home Ministries. Calvary United Methodist Church, one of our church partners, recently posed this question to their members and several people answered by sharing their experiences as volunteers with Home Sweet Home.

Eric Hoss uses his professional expertise to provide career and job interview services. Eric and his wife, Terri, recently participated in Home Sweet Home's Night in a Car experience, to deepen their understanding of their neighbors who are in need of shelter.

Ann Powell and Barb Gallick use their special skills as shoppers to do the grocery shopping for Home Sweet Home every Thursday. They know that their job is not just about food, but is really about using meals as a way to connect with people and to help transform their lives.

Fred Nimke and Richard Nielsen apply their carpentry skills to whatever jobs Home Sweet Home has, from replacing ceiling tiles to installing shelving. Their willing spirits are contagious as they rub elbows with their neighbors at Home Sweet Home.

For the past 3 years Joe Landon has invited his neighbors at Home Sweet Home to join him in creating works of art nearly every Thursday evening. Joe provides a safe, inviting, and encouraging place where neighbors are free to express themselves through art.

Who is your neighbor? A question of equal importance is, who needs you to be a neighbor today?

We celebrate and give thanks for our neighbors who join with us as volunteers to be neighbors to the people we serve.

In Neighborly Love,

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HSHM Family Reunion

Our founder, Billy Shelper, reached out to many groups that he perceived as worthy of love. One of his favorite spots to celebrate with others was at Miller Park. Shelper hosted picnics for many individuals including several groups of orphans. The pictures featured here are from celebrations at Miller Park, taken at the McLean County Soldiers' and Sailors' Monument – a favorite location for group photos at events held by HSHM.

As we continue to celebrate our Centennial, we invite you to join us on July 1, 2017 at the Miller Park Pavillion for our HSHM Family Reunion. The event will feature a picnic lunch, group photo, and volunteer recognition. We look forward to celebrating 100 years of hope! To RSVP, please visit www.eventbrite.com and search Home Sweet Home Ministries Family Reunion.

Save the Date!

July 1: HSHM Family Reunion at the Miller Park Pavilion

Helping Hands



Each year we have thousands of volunteers answer the call to serve those in need. Whether it's providing a meal, a blanket, or even just simple conversation, there are so many ways in which our volunteers help their neighbors here at Home Sweet Home Ministries. When it comes to preparing a meal, members of Charis Community Church are more than happy to serve up a little hope.

Charis Community Church first started volunteering with Home Sweet Home Ministries a little over a year ago. A group of around 30 volunteers rotates each month to help prepare and serve supper to the men, women, and children in need in our community.

"One thing I love about Home Sweet Home is the unending array of different ways to be involved here. Everyone has different gifts that the Lord has given them and just connecting folks from our church to those opportunities has been wonderful," adds Chelsea Adler, Charis Supper Club's team leader.

"We have really enjoyed it. Everyone who works here has been very kind. We have always felt welcome, and there's always jobs to do," says Zack Brewer, a fellow Charis volunteer. "We've helped prepare bagged lunches, pork chops, chicken, desserts, fried fish, and lots of other different things."

The supper club says it's been fun giving back and learning a thing or two in the kitchen.

"I'm not a chef at all," shares Chelsea. "I've learned a lot of things in terms of everything we've made. All the meals are different every time we come in. It's fun to learn new skills and cook different cuisines that I haven't done before."

"The food quality here is really great," says Zack. "It's hard for me to not dig into it sometimes as we're making it."

Despite not eating a single bite, the volunteers still leave with their hearts full.

"As much as you want serving to be a blessing to others when you do it, it also is so filling for myself," Chelsea explains. "It brings me a lot of joy just getting to break out of my normal routine and meet people that maybe I would not otherwise meet. I know that God has a purpose in all that."

"We love helping to extend the love of God," adds Zack. "If they can feel the love of Jesus through getting a meal from people they don't know, I think that makes it all worth it."



Spring Cleaning at Mission Mart

Spring is a great time for owners to clear out the clutter and get organized; and the Mission Mart is no exception. If you haven't been to the store recently, now is a great time to come and check out our newly revamped linens area. The new layout makes it easier to browse our wonderful selection of sheets, towels, and tablecloths. Every time you shop our store, 100% of net proceeds benefit Home Sweet Home Ministries. Be sure to shop smart. Shop Mission Mart! And remember: As you clean out your house, don't forget to donate your gently used items to HSHM. We accept donations Monday through Saturday 8am-4pm at our Receiving Center located at 301 East Oakland Avenue in Bloomington.



August 4-13: 15th Annual OSF Shoe Drive

HSHM Women's Auxiliary

As Home Sweet Home celebrates its 100th anniversary, our Women's Auxiliary is observing its 45th anniversary of providing assistance and support to Home Sweet Home through their advocacy, prayers, time, talents, and treasure. Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Upcoming meetings are:

- May 8, Judy Brucker, CASA and CAC Executive Director, 12:00 noon, potluck luncheon at the Billy Shelper Center, 303 E. Oakland Avenue, Bloomington.
- June 12, Spring Luncheon, 12:00 noon, St. Luke Union Church, 2101 E. Washington Street, Bloomington.
- July 10, 12:00 noon, potluck luncheon at the Billy Shelper Center, 303 E. Oakland Avenue, Bloomington.

Community Partners

The support from the community continues to be a blessing! Bridgestone Americas Trust Fund donated \$3,000 to our Bread for Life Food Co-op.

Community members quickly restocked our shelves with oatmeal, when supplies were running low.

Around 50 participants raised over \$25,000 for our Night In A Car fundraiser.

Several youth groups, ISU students, and IWU students volunteered at our warehouse.

State Farm presented America Saves Week at the Mission Mart.

Chick-Fil-A hosted 2 Adopt-a-Meals in our dining center for our residents.

Fleet Feet Sports in Bloomington hosted the 4th Annual Run for Hope to benefit HSHM.

We are truly blessed by all your support. Thank you!



Thank you Volunteers!

April is Volunteer Appreciation month and Home Sweet Home Ministries would like to thank all those who have graciously served at the ministry. In 2016, Home Sweet Home had 4,177 volunteers contribute over 48,000 hours of service. Our work would not be possible without all of your generous support. Thank you for your devotion to help others in need. To learn more about volunteer opportunities, please visit www.hshministries.org.



Prayer Requests

Please continue to pray for Home Sweet Home Ministries and the services we provide.

Help us pray for:

- our residents, families, and individuals in need of shelter.
- volunteers that devote their time in our shelter and warehouse.
- clients and staff working at Mission Mart.
- staff and volunteers involved in our July picnic.