

OCTOBER 2020



Candice's Journey

Homeless

Before Candice first came to Home Sweet Home Ministries, she was struggling to make ends meet. Due to her pregnancy she could only work part time and quickly fell behind on rent and bills. Eventually she was evicted from her apartment. With no savings or family to rely on, she turned to the shelter for help.

"I packed up and prayed there was space at Home Sweet Home. It was my best and safest option for myself and my new baby."

Candice was welcomed with open arms and warm smiles. "Even though I was at what I consider a low point in my life, the staff really made staying at Home Sweet Home a more comforting experience. They actually cared for each individual genuinely and went above and beyond to ensure we were all comfortable and in good spirits."

She was assigned a case manager and quickly got to work on establishing her goals. Over the course of 5 months, she worked on saving money for a down payment, filing for assistance programs, completing a housing application, and getting items she needed for when her daughter arrived.

Home Sweet Home

"I completed all of those things during my stay, but not alone," shares Candice. "Between staff and support from other residents I was able to have a safe space for myself and my daughter and more help than I could ever ask for. With drive, support and perseverance I was able to achieve success."

Never
give up on
yourself!

Success!

Candice utilized her time and resources to explore new opportunities. "I decided to volunteer at YWCA. This action step opened a door for me straight to my dream job, a career in social work!

I was able to make new connections that eventually led to a job offer and now I am a Social Enterprise Specialist at YWCA."

Secured Housing

"If you told me this would happen a year ago, I would have said you had the wrong Candice. The moral of my story is, never give up on yourself. If doors start closing on you now, keep pushing forward and finding new doors to open. If another door is locked, keep working at it because you can make a new key!"

Dream Job

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

O give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever.

– Psalm 136:1

Does anything last forever? The world has been through a dramatic season of change in the last several months. At times it seems that we cannot count on anything remaining the same.

At Home Sweet Home Ministries, our employees and volunteers have changed their work habits. Our shelter residents have experienced changing rules. Community members have needed to change their expectations of what services they will receive from Home Sweet Home Ministries due to restrictions imposed by the pandemic.

Despite all the changes that have been necessary, certain things have remained constant. We continue to stay true to our mission statement: *to demonstrate Christ's love through innovative approaches that instill hope, restore lives, and build community.* The spirit of our mission statement has endured throughout our 103 year history.

You, our valued friends, have made it possible for us to live out our mission statement through the years, despite the changing environment in which we live. Thank you!

The psalmist reminds us that one thing will always be true: "The Lord is good, for his steadfast love endures forever." We are capable of adjusting and modifying what we do and how we do it, because we know that the Lord is in control. Thanks be to God.

Best wishes to you as we approach the holiday season. May you experience peace, love, and joy.

Blessings,

Mary Ann Pullin

Mary Ann Pullin
Chief Executive
mpullin@hshministries.org
(309) 319-2833



Co-op Doors Reopened

As a safety precaution due to COVID-19, the Bread For Life Food Co-op shifted to an emergency response mode of operating in March. Pre-packaged food boxes were provided to anyone in need. Over the next three months, 1,341 food boxes were distributed. As Illinois moved into Phase 4 of the Governor's Restore Illinois plan, the co-op doors were officially reopened on July 13th.

"It has been rough without all of our members, but now that we're getting back into the swing of things, we couldn't be happier," says Samantha Williams, Bread For Life Food Co-op Coordinator. "We've heard from our members countless times 'I've missed everyone,' 'I can't wait to tell you what I've been through,' 'I've missed working and I've been so bored at home with no one to talk to.' It just feels so good to once again join in fellowship as we assist others in providing food for their families."

Many new procedures are in place to ensure the safety of co-op members. At the door before entering, temperature checks are performed and hand sanitizer is offered. There are not as many shifts to work and the number of people allowed in the co-op has been limited. Face masks and gloves are also required to be worn at all times. Gratefully everyone has been very understanding.

Co-op member Shannon says, "I'm just so glad I can come back! My husband has been out of work and I had to have surgery. We've been hurting. This is where I normally get all of my groceries."

HSHM is blessed to be making an indelible difference in the lives of others. Thank you so much for helping our community overcome food deficiencies during these challenging times.

Support Us In Prayer

As Home Sweet Home prepares for the holiday season, we graciously ask your help in praying for:

- our community as we all continue to cope with COVID-19.
- the safety and health of our volunteers, clients, and staff.
- our Veterans in search of renewal.
- community members and churches supporting Give Thanks.
- our food source providers, including local restaurants and grocery stores.
- individuals and families in need of safe shelter.

Thank you for keeping our ministry in prayer.



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a great way to experience the realities of many who are forced to live out of their car through Bloomington's harsh winters. While only for one night, past participants report that the event is a real eye-opener with many asking, "I don't know how people do this for weeks, months, even years at a time." If you're looking for a missional experience for your family, group, or friends, consider Night in a Car on Friday, February 5th.

This year's event will be done "drive-in" style at Trinity Lutheran Church, which will be open for quick bathroom breaks and coffee. The entire night will be spent in your vehicles with special learning experiences broadcasted through an FM transmitter and online. If you prefer, you also have the option to "zoom-in" and join us online from your own driveway. You've never quite experienced an event like this. For more information or to register your team, go to nightinacar.org or contact our Donor Relations Coordinator, Todd Keller at 309-319-2839 or tkeller@hshministries.org.

Kitchen Kindness



For about a week in July, Home Sweet Home's kitchen underwent renovations. It was in need of a new ceiling and lights. During construction, staff could not access the kitchen to serve meals. We put out a request on social media asking you to help purchase meals for our residents from 10 partnering restaurants. The response was overwhelming. Over 20 donors generously provided over \$5,000!

Throughout the week, hunger was satisfied and hearts were full. "My heart was overjoyed when I went to pick up the meals at Firehouse Subs. Customers heard the staff prepping meals for us and paid for them. That was so wonderful," shares Carol Schrenk, Home Sweet Home Ministries' Kitchen Manager.

"It was amazing to see how the community came together to provide during our project. It's so good to be back up and running. The new LED lights shine bright! We are thrilled to have a more inviting work space. Thanks for your support as always."

Continue to help our food ministry! Visit hshministries.org to find our needs list under the Ways To Give tab. Thank You!

Volunteers Return



With new safety measures in place, Home Sweet Home Ministries was thrilled to welcome back our first group of volunteers for training at the start of June. Volunteers have especially appreciated learning about how Home Sweet Home provides trauma-informed care.

Within the first month, over 100 volunteers had completed the training. Nadine Prall, who has volunteered with HSHM for the past 7 years, attended the very first session and was back in the kitchen on June 15th. "I am happy to be back seeing old friends and making new friends in the kitchen. I also enjoy interacting with residents, hopefully brightening their day with a smile."

As we continue to cope with COVID-19, Nadine looks forward to the day when HSHM can fully reopen the dining room doors. "I hope in the future as the virus subsides, we can bring back the fellowship at mealtime with more people at the tables and the programs that help so many at HSHM."

Your time and efforts make our work possible. For more information on volunteering, please visit our website hshministries.org and click on the 'Volunteer' tab for opportunities to serve. Thank you.

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Home Sweet Home Ministries

Like Us!





Home Sweet Home Ministries, Midwest Food Bank, Thrivent Financial, and several community churches are excited to partner once again this year to provide 2,500 Thanksgiving meal boxes and turkeys to families in need. Given our current circumstances evolving around COVID-19, your support means so much more this holiday season.

We are blessed to have Hy-Vee and Schnuck's helping with the cause. Both grocery stores will have turkey cards and special promotions on items for purchase. Anyone from the community can visit their locations in-store or online and shop from the needs list below.

1 Box of Stuffing Mix	1 Can of Cranberry Sauce
2 Cans of Green Beans	1 Box of Pie Crust Mix
2 Cans of Cream of Mushroom	1 Can of Pumpkin Pie
1 Box of Mashed Potatoes	1 Can of Evaporated Milk
1 Envelope of Gravy	1 Frozen Turkey
1 Can French Fried Onions	

Donations will be gladly be accepted at Midwest Food Bank located at 2301 Warehouse Drive in Normal or at Home Sweet Home Ministries located at 303 East Oakland Avenue in Bloomington.

Thank you so much for coming together to do something amazing in preparation for the upcoming Thanksgiving season. With your support, over 10,000 individuals and families will enjoy a delicious dinner this November.

Current Needs

With your support, Home Sweet Home provides individuals and families with access to food and other basic needs. Please kindly consider helping us collect the following items:

- Canned corn
- Canned carrots
- Canned soup
- Cream of chicken
- Mashed potatoes
- Women's socks
- Toilet paper
- Deodorant (Men's and Women's)
- Body wash (Men's and Women's)

Donations can be dropped off at the shelter at 303 East Oakland Avenue in Bloomington at any time. Thank you for providing comfort to those in need.



A Fond Farewell

The Women's Auxiliary at Home Sweet Home Ministries has been a strong supporter since their beginning, in 1972. They have faithfully prayed, volunteered, sponsored special events, and made numerous donations in order to make a difference in the lives of the people that are served at Home Sweet Home Ministries.

They have taken pride in having "the best potluck lunch in town," but they have been unable to meet since the COVID-19 pandemic. Members have become friends and have enjoyed the fellowship that they shared. A recent poll of the members revealed that a majority were in favor of discontinuing the auxiliary. As a final donation, their remaining treasury funds will be used to purchase a freezer for the Bread for Life Food Co-op.

We are extremely grateful for the support of Women's Auxiliary over the past 48 years and we wish all members the very best.