

A Testament of Service

At Home Sweet Home Ministries, we witness everyday people doing extraordinary things. As part of Volunteer Appreciation Month, HSHM wanted to take a moment to introduce you to one of these outstanding individuals, Dave Kinley. Dave teamed up with us as a Kitchen Assistant in January 2024. His initial desire was simple -- to find a place where he could lend a hand and give back to the community.

"I was just looking for some place to volunteer. I've been retired from teaching for 8 years. I thought it was time for me to start giving back because I've been so blessed," shares Dave.

Through his work in the kitchen, he has touched countless lives, serving up not just meals, but smiles as well. "I've done sack lunches. I usually do peanut butter and jelly, and that's my favorite. I've also cut up watermelons over the summer...I might have ruined a few turkeys during Thanksgiving season," teases Dave.

Dave has since become an indispensable member of our team, selflessly sharing his time and skills with those who are most in need. As meals are served, you can often hear the echo of his warm laughter mingling with the clatter of serving spoons and the hum of heartfelt conversations.

"I love the people I work with; it's a small group. And they're just great people. It's just good to see the fruits of your labor."

For Dave, volunteering has unfolded into a heartwarming journey of connection and fulfillment. "You get to know some of the people. You get to know them by name. You realize that God made us all and it's just a warm feeling, knowing that you're helping others."



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MISSION STATEMENT

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



A Message from Matt

"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."
– 1st Corinthians 12:27

Every April, we honor the volunteers who so generously share their time and talents with Home Sweet Home Ministries. Having the support of so many caring individuals from the community we serve is a true blessing.

The generous contributions of volunteers have been integral to our work since we were founded in 1917. In fact, we have numerous historic photographs from our early years that depict members of the community serving meals, worshipping, distributing food and clothing, and supporting others with kindness. A quick walk through our facilities today reveals the same thing – volunteers serving meals, washing dishes, picking up groceries, welcoming visitors to The Junction, and even working behind the scenes helping our administrative staff on our special events. Home Sweet Home Ministries can demonstrate Christ's love in so many ways because of this generous outpouring from so many of you!

On behalf of all of us at Home Sweet Home Ministries, let me say thank you for so generously partnering in our work. May God bless you all for your faithful support of our ministry.

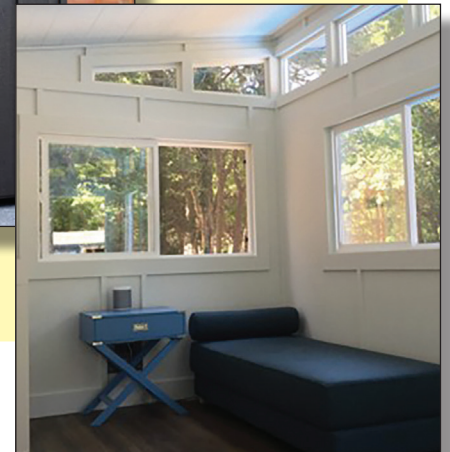
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A New Hope for



Home Sweet Home Ministries is excited to share that plans for the development of the community's first non-congregate emergency shelter program continue to move forward. This first-of-its-kind model to Central Illinois will provide transformational housing focused on serving local community members who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness. Thanks to the collaboration with Connect Transit, HSHM is close to finalizing an agreement for the location of the project. HSHM intends to develop a private, gated-community style campus that will be staffed around the clock and in which robust supportive services will be offered by Home Sweet Home and partnering nonprofit organizations. With the anticipated space to serve upwards of 60 unsheltered adults at one time, it will become the largest emergency shelter program for adults in McLean County. We hope to share more information soon in the coming months. Stay tuned for exciting developments!



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Driving In Success

HSHM is thrilled to share that Night in a Car raised over \$149,000 this year! Thank you to all our participants, sponsors, donors, and volunteers that helped make the night a success. We would like to extend a very special thank you to Young America Realty and all our sponsors for their support.

On February 7th, around 165 participants spent the overnight hours in their cars to raise awareness for those experiencing homelessness. During the event, participants enjoyed learning more about Home Sweet Home through an insightful Journey of Hope board game and resident testimonials.

Joey, a resident of Home Sweet Home, shared, "It was all the simple stuff that I didn't have out there, but I do have here, that makes the world of difference. And it's not really simple stuff. It's huge stuff. But people think about it every day like it's nothing."

"I've been treated with nothing but respect here," adds Tammy, another resident of Home Sweet Home. "They're trying to do what they can to help us."

"They want to be the ones to make an impression in your life," expresses Joey.

Donors like you are helping many others like Tammy and Joey achieve stability. Because of your generosity and compassion, more work can be done to support your neighbors in need. Thank You!

Save the date!
We'll rev up for our 10th annual Night In A Car on February 6th, 2026!



In June of 2024, Home Sweet Home introduced our Street Outreach program where staff go out to various locations and encampments throughout Bloomington-Normal. Our goal is to alleviate the day-to-day struggles faced by the unsheltered population.

Since the program's inception, a total of 277 individuals have been in contact with us. HSHM has supplied others with hygiene supplies and basic survival items, distributing over 114 tents and blankets and 90 tarps. We have also helped individuals with a variety of services, including 21 finding shelter and 17 obtaining their birth certificates.



During the winter months, Home Sweet Home was fortunate to have our friends at WGLT film a part of our journey. In late February, WGLT debuted their documentary "Frozen and Forgotten". You can check out the series by visiting wgl.org/frozen-and-forgotten.

Through these connections, we are fostering a community of support and resilience. Thank you so much for helping us to reach out to our neighbors in need.



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Home Sweet Home Ministries

Like Us!



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He has also become a big advocate of our ministry. "I tell people all the time about Home Sweet Home. If you want to give financially or if you want to give your time, I guarantee people, guarantee them, that it goes to good use here," emphasizes Dave.

It's easy to see that Dave has a great and giving spirit. And his excitement is catching on. "My son and daughter, Kurt and Karen, who both have Down syndrome, are now on the list to volunteer. They have gotten to know people by their first name and like working with others. When they can, they come in and work alongside me. They love it."

Like Dave and his family, each one of you can make a difference. Whether you choose to join our team of volunteers, to share our stories, or to contribute financially, your involvement is crucial to our ability to continue our mission. Every act of kindness creates an overwhelming tide of positivity and change. If you feel moved to act, please visit hshministries.org to learn more about how to get involved. We thank you for being a part of our family.



Double Your Impact This May

We are blessed to share that a group of generous donors is challenging the community to match their gifts of **\$50,000** to HSHM through our May Match Challenge. This challenge helps Home Sweet Home continue to provide services so that individuals and families experiencing homelessness can get the help they need. Home Sweet Home greatly appreciates any community support given. Together we will continue to help those seeking refuge and renewal. Thank you so much!

Donations to the May Match Challenge can be made:

- Online at hshministries.org/donate
 - "May Match" should be indicated in the Campaign box.
- By mail or in person to:
 - Home Sweet Home Ministries
303 E. Oakland Ave.
Bloomington, IL 61701
 - "May Match" should be indicated on the gift.

Current Needs

With your help, Home Sweet Home can nourish and comfort the men, women, and children seeking a fresh start. Please kindly consider collecting the following items:

- Bottled Water
- Coffee
- Deodorant (Men's and Women's)
- Body Wash (Men's and Women's)
- Toilet Paper
- Paper Towels
- New Sleeping Bags
- New 1-2 Person Tents

Donations can be dropped off at the Bread For Life Co-op at 301 East Oakland Avenue in Bloomington Monday through Friday from 9 am to 4 pm. Be sure to check out hshministries.org and click on the "Ways to Give" tab for our updated needs and Amazon Wish Lists. Thank you so much for your help!

Join Us In Prayer

As Home Sweet Home strives to help others in our community, we kindly ask your help in praying for:

- the health and safety of volunteers who devote their time to our shelter.
- individuals, families, and Veterans searching for refuge.
- our food source providers, including local restaurants and grocery stores.
- our staff and community partners involved in Street Outreach.
- all those involved with our plans for a shelter village.
- all those in our community in need of comfort and hope.

Thank you for surrounding us in prayer. God Bless!