



Solutions to Homelessness

WINTER 2011 NEWSLETTER



MADISON CARES

Reducing Homelessness Together

From the Desk of Steven Schooler,
Executive Director

For the past 18 months we have been working on Madison Cares, a campaign to raise funds to expand housing and services for homeless people suffering from serious mental illness. As a follower of Porchlight, you know that homelessness is a complex puzzle and that mental illness is a contributing factor. If we are successful with Madison Cares we will be able to provide more support for people suffering from the disability of mental illness. And this is a critical step in reducing homelessness in Madison.

Raising the funds to build a new building in tough economic times is also a complex puzzle. Slowly but surely over the past year and a half, individuals, foundations, companies and the city of Madison have come together to commit to the vision of an integrated housing and support center for some of our most vulnerable community members.

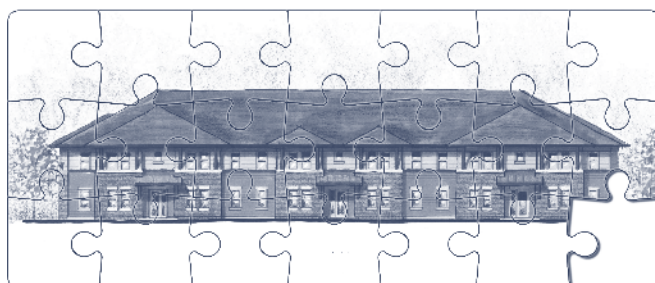
We are proud that our community has raised more than \$3.1 million of the \$3.5 million needed to construct these housing units and facilities. We feel that the project was aptly named Madison Cares because you have shown that Madison really does care. As each donation arrives I feel that we are putting together the puzzle pieces that will soon become a completed picture.

I struggled for the words that would express the critical importance of this effort. Recently I received a letter from a former resident who suffers from mental illness, and I realized that his letter expresses our hope for this campaign better than I could on my own. Excerpts from our resident's letter are in the next column.

His dream was simply for a bed. **Our dream is to provide those homeless suffering from serious mental illness with a place to put a bed.** Our dearest hope is to raise the money to conclude our campaign, and break ground this summer.

We are within hailing distance of our goal but we desperately need a few more puzzle pieces to complete the vision.

Join me & help make this dream a reality.



Excerpt of a letter from a former Porchlight Safe Haven resident who was served by our programs.

Today, I went shopping for a gift: a special gift, for of all people, my "self." I've been sleeping quite poorly. My last solace is an external aid for sleep. They say a bed is a place where dreams are made and for nightmares, where they are quashed. I think to myself what a strange act to buy one's self a gift when just a year before you had "no place to call your own!"

I steadied myself for the great purchase. You see, I had worked 3 weeks without a day off to be able to spend such a sum! I thought of the great undertaking I was in the midst of and starting to have my doubts of completing such a task. For an alcoholic, bipolar person, was I trying to achieve too much with too little or setting myself up for total defeat with no means of redemption?

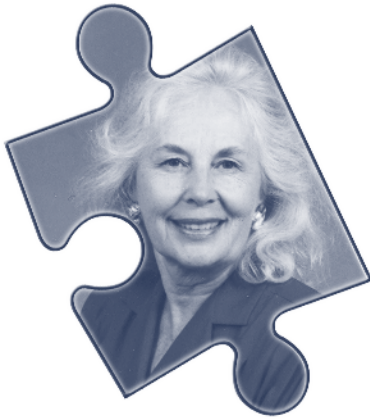
I feared, as people in recovery do, that spending limited resources on such "stable," normal things would prohibit me from spending sprees and irresponsible acts of self-will gone awry. Why invest in a future that was unsure and untraveled, when I could waste it, instead, on a sure "quick fix"? You see alcoholics rarely make investments, let alone long-term ones, and bipolar people find little reason to celebrate.

I began worrying about my undertaking. I had researched all my options, diligently unearthed my finances and skimmed & saved for my purchase. Yet, I had forgotten what had led me to this point in my recovery. A person & a place & a thing that allowed me to be. Given the chance to choose life...Given the opportunity to advance...Given the support to let dreams come true...

My wish is a place for all people to be. My dream is a place where dreams are made & never quashed. My dream is for a simple bed for a weary man to lay his tired head...

**Today, my friend,
without any fanfare,
I chose to buy a bed!**

Some of the puzzle pieces of support that have gotten us this far.



"You can reach me at home." How often have we said that! Yet, for persons who are homeless and have a brain disorder or serious mental illness, home is not part of their lives. Expanding the availability of affordable, decent, safe housing will provide homes along with the stability and comfort that home brings.

**Nancy Abraham, Founder,
National Alliance on Mental Illness**

The work that Porchlight is doing to assist the mentally ill so they can function within our community is extremely important. As we have learned from Porchlight, mental illness can often lead to homelessness and if the mentally ill can get the care that they need they



are able to become functioning and contributing members of our community which allows them to enjoy the many amenities of this community that all of us enjoy.

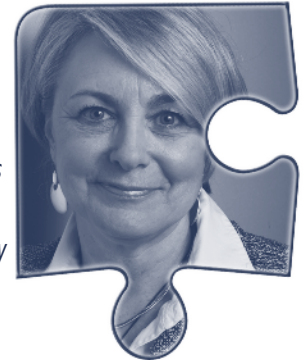
Susan Schmitz, President, Downtown Madison, Inc.

Porchlight's work is vital in helping those individuals who may be temporarily displaced or suffering from the challenges of mental illness. The Safe Haven project is a practical way of helping people get back on their feet, allowing them a safe environment and dignity they deserve. I support the Safe Haven project and endorse Porchlight and its Capital Campaign endeavor to continue its good and vital work in the community.

Andrew Sewell, Music Director, Wisconsin Chamber Orchestra



Our community has a golden opportunity to express our compassion and support for people with mental illness, by supporting Madison Cares. Madison has a long history of reaching out to others in need. Porchlight's campaign will address a growing need to provide adequate, safe and affordable housing for members of our community that are struggling to establish themselves as productive citizens. Please join me in supporting this worthy and important effort.



Deb Archer, President/CEO, Greater Madison Convention & Visitors Bureau

Whenever the discussion gets around to the effectiveness of the area's many nonprofits, Porchlight always gets mentioned as one of the best. Porchlight has been at the forefront dealing with the problem of homelessness, first finding the homeless housing and then working to change their lives so they can go out and become

productive citizens. Its work is especially critical these days since, tragically, many of the homeless include veterans who particularly need help with the mental anguish that their combat experiences have caused. Porchlight's Madison Cares campaign is aimed at expanding its programs and providing more facilities for those desperately in need. Porchlight is an organization that richly deserves all of our support. Madison needs to solve its

Without Safe Haven I would have been out in the cold. They helped me when I was alone and had nowhere to go. They gave me a place to stay, understood my problems and helped me get treatment, so that I could move on with my life.

Laurie Clinton, former Safe Haven client



homeless problem and with your help Porchlight can be in a position to make that happen.

Dave Zweifel, Editor Emeritus, Capital Times



About Madison Cares

Madison Cares is an initiative from Porchlight to build two new facilities to support and house homeless people with serious mental illness. Madison Cares is an integral part of Porchlight's vision to create a stronger, safer, and healthier community by serving those most in need.

Through our Safe Haven program, Porchlight has successfully served homeless people suffering from serious mental illness for over a decade. Our area's economic climate combined with the large number of returning veterans is increasing the demand for these services. Porchlight has launched Madison Cares to take the bold step of building two new buildings to accommodate our area's increasing need.



One of the new buildings will be dedicated to Porchlight's Safe Haven program. Safe Haven's current rented space is no longer suitable and is inadequate to meet growing needs. The new building will include fourteen single room units along with a communal kitchen, office and program space, and ten additional units of permanent housing.

The second building will provide twenty-four efficiency apartments for long-term housing. These buildings will allow Porchlight to continue to expand its carefully targeted, high quality housing and services to support mentally ill homeless people in our community.

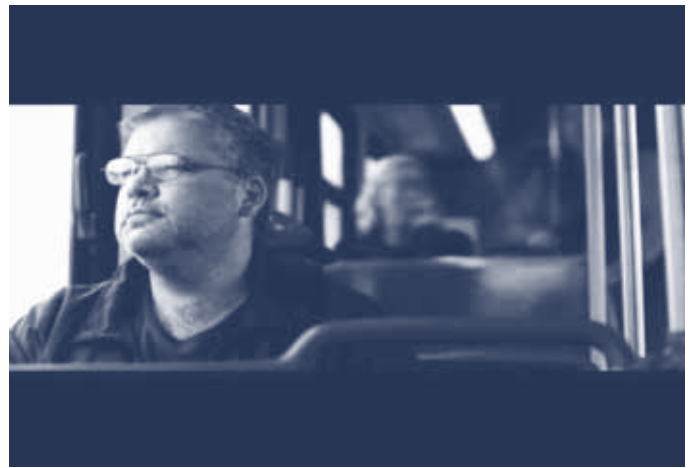
Please consider helping us complete the puzzle by making a generous gift to the Madison Cares Campaign.



Who Cares?

We are filled with anticipation as the completion of the Madison Cares campaign comes into view. In the most challenging of times, so many people have come together for the Madison Cares campaign because they know first hand (or second, through someone close to them) that life throws curve balls sometimes. And when that curve ball is a serious mental illness, plans for the future can quickly unravel.

That happened to Mark Diman. Growing up in McFarland, Mark had every reason to think his life would be completely within his control. He had a strong, caring family, academic achievement, good friends and, as captain of his high school football team, athletic success.



As so often happens, the first signs of mental illness appeared for Mark in college. Before long he started drinking, dropped out of school and found himself at Porchlight's Drop-In Shelter. Hard work, treatment and stable housing got Mark through rough times.

Now employed and living independently, Mark is sharing his story in a new commercial, *Who Cares?*, produced for Porchlight by John Roach Projects. The piece does a beautiful job of portraying how mental illness can drive people from being at the very heart of a family and community to becoming nearly invisible in society.

From the start, the sharp focus of the Madison Cares campaign has been to create a supportive, stable environment to help people get back on their feet after mental illness has caused them to falter. As a community, we have much to gain by ensuring that all people can fully participate in the society in which they live.

See *Who Cares?* at: www.porchlightinc.org



Porchlight Needs List

The following items are in high demand and in short supply at the Porchlight donation warehouse. If you would like to donate any of these items, please call (608) 257-2534 or drop them off at the donation warehouse at 1490 Martin Street at Door #3 on the side of the building between 9:00 am and 3:00 pm, Monday through Friday.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Tooth Paste | Silverware |
| Tooth Brushes | Laundry Detergent |
| Clock Radios | Baby Diapers |
| Toasters | Deodorant |
| Steam Irons | Cleaning Supplies |
| Kitchen Dishes | Non-Perishable Foods |
| Twin and Full Size Sheets | |

The following items are needed by the Brooks Street food pantry. The pantry serves Porchlight residents living at 306 N. Brooks Street.

- | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| Canned Meats and Stews | Frozen Meat |
| Peanut Butter | Jam/Jelly |
| Pasta Sauce | Canned Fruits |
| Cereal | Frozen Pizza |



This publication was made possible with help from the Chrysalis Work Center. Chrysalis volunteers complete bulk-mail projects for non-profit organizations at no charge.

Chrysalis' Work Center program provides low-stress opportunities for people with mental illnesses to gain work experience, enhance social interaction and increase meaningful day structure.

Please contact 608.256.3102 or chrys_workcenter@sbcglobal.net



www.workwithchrysalis.org

Our Mission: Porchlight strives to decrease the Dane County homeless population by providing shelter, housing, supportive services, and a sense of community in ways that empower residents and program participants to positively shape their lives.

Facebook.com/porchlightmadison • www.porchlightinc.org



Return Service Requested

306 North Brooks Street
Madison, WI 53715



Winter 2011

Non-Profit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Madison, WI
Permit No. 2333