

WINTER/
SPRING
2007-08

A BULLETIN FOR THE FRIENDS AND SUPPORTERS OF CLARE HOUSING

REFLECTION *20 Year Anniversary*

Reflection commemorated 20 years of housing, care, and services with an opening reception, an installation of memorabilia from the homes and a memorial wall honoring the 202 people who have passed away in our six care homes over the last 20 years. Speakers at the opening reception included Lee Lewis, executive director of Clare Housing, Jim Maurer, manager and development associate of Park House and Maureen Wells, social worker to the HIV homes.

Event attendees reminisced about the early days while looking through the many scrapbooks, quilts and photo albums that have been put together by staff, friends and family members in honor of people who have lived in our homes.

Background

Twenty years ago a retired Benedictine monk named Brother Louie opened a home for men with AIDS in southwest Minneapolis. It was the late 1980's, and the residents came to the modest home during the final stages of their illness. Here they received compassionate end-of-care. They were treated with dignity and loving-kindness at a time when many hospitals and nursing homes isolated what they called their "AIDS-patients". This

continues on back



HOME AT LAST

Homeless families and individuals find stability

Clare Housing is pleased to announce that Project Cornerstone, a scattered-site affordable housing program, is up and running. Clare Housing is leasing 10 market rate apartments (1BR, 2BR and 3BR) in the Twin Cities, and then subleasing them to individuals and families who are low-income, HIV+ and who have experienced long-term homelessness.

Tenants began moving into their new homes in February. The program is designed so that tenants contribute 30% of their household income toward rent. It is hoped that this affordable rate will provide permanent housing stability to Project Cornerstone tenants. Clare Housing has partnered with Minnesota AIDS Project's Transitional Housing Program to provide support services to tenants who may need assistance managing and maintaining their new place.

This program represents the first area of expansion of housing projects as identified in Clare Housing's strategic vision to create more housing options for people living with HIV/AIDS. Our strategic vision explicitly states that Clare Housing wishes to serve individuals and families who are most marginalized, have the least access to resources, are most vulnerable, and who are in need of family housing. To continue this vision, Clare Housing will apply for funding to increase the number of units for Project Cornerstone for 2009 and beyond.



Long-time care givers, Julie Ronning and Kim Langness reminisce.

Project Cornerstone experienced the excitement of reuniting a previously homeless mother and her two teenage sons in a comfortable and affordable 3 bedroom apartment. The mother had been living in a sober living environment for persons with chemical health problems. Although she liked living there and was successful in maintaining her sobriety, she was torn because her two teenage sons could not live there with her. They were staying in separate shelters and foster care homes. Through Project Cornerstone, the family was able to reunite! They are looking forward to getting settled in their new home and having spring and summer barbecues in the back yard.

■ **Thank you for helping us build a better path for people living with HIV/AIDS.**

PLEASE VISIT US ONLINE AT: www.clarehousing.org

Home Profiles

This is the third in a series on the history of our homes for people living with HIV/AIDS. To read more about the history of Clare Housing and housing for people with HIV/AIDS check out the "About Clare Housing" page of our website www.clarehousing.org.



LOVE, COMPASSION & TIRELESS DRIVE CREATES THIRD HIV/AIDS HOME *Agape Home*

Agape Home was the third HIV/AIDS foster care home opened in the Twin Cities. Vicki McMullen, an active member of Metropolitan Community Church's (MCC's) AIDS Task Force, birthed the idea of Agape Home in 1991 after being inspired by her good friend living with AIDS, Kelly Singleton. In 1992, Vicki started writing grant applications and eventually received a start-up grant from the McKnight Foundation, but only if it could be matched. Miraculously, an anonymous donor heard about this challenge and called Vicki several weeks later and donated \$50,000, the entire match amount! Soon following, a turn-of-the-century Victorian home was purchased and church members began renovations. They opened their doors in 1993.

Once open, the real work began. Agape Home staff and volunteers delivered end of life care with dignity and compassion. Most residents were there only three or four short months before passing away.

Kelly Singleton, one of Agape's co-founders, served on the first board of directors. Although he himself was living with HIV, he volunteered tirelessly during those early months to get Agape Home up and running. After a long battle, Kelly Singleton passed away from complications of AIDS a year after the home opened. He was 32 years old. Then, five months later, Vicki McMullen passed away unexpectedly of a heart attack.

The entire organization was grieving, but the needs of the residents kept staff members and volunteers going. Board chair Dann Peterson stepped in as interim executive director with the help of Terry McEowen. Through this leadership and the commitment of staff and volunteers, Agape Home stabilized and began looking forward once again.

In 1998 the board recognized the growing need for more AIDS housing and began planning for an additional house. Brian Lundequam (current property manager for the Clare Apartments) was hired during this period as the care director of Agape Home. Talks of a merger between Agape Home and Grace House began. It was proposed, as an experiment, to see whether one executive director (John Whalen) could serve as executive director of both agencies. The experiment worked and the two agencies (Grace House and Agape Homes) formally merged in 2001, creating "AIDS Care Partners."

Since November of 1993, Agape Home has served over 90 men and women living with AIDS, including 39 persons that have passed away from the disease. Today residents live more independently yet still need the support of 24-hour care giving staff who assist with their health management and personal care. Currently, Angela Maki Jones works as the Unit Manager of both Agape and Agape Dos. Long-time staff members Mary Boll and Gretchen Briggs still work as HIV/AIDS caregivers at Agape Home.

**AGAPE COMES FROM A
GREEK WORD MEANING
UNCONDITIONAL LOVE**

**SINCE 1993 AGAPE HOME
HAS SERVED OVER 90
PEOPLE LIVING WITH AIDS.**



Vicki McMullen in the kitchen of Agape Home (circa 1994).



Mark with Vicki, a resident at Clare House.

"Clare House is my only focus," says Mark. "I like to go deep and really get into the mission and messages of the organization. Giving a lot to one place feels more important to me personally than giving a little to many places."

WHEN MARK BISHOP DIGS IN, HE DIGS DEEP **Feature Volunteer: Mark Bishop**

Officially, Mark is on our books as volunteer cook at Clare House cooking twice a month. That's how it all began anyway. Actually, it all began in Washington DC where his work as civil engineer with Kimley-Horn and Associates often takes him for business. Instead of sitting in his hotel room after his work day was done, he sought out a place to make an impact. He found Joseph's Home, a supportive and nurturing home for formerly homeless men and women with terminal illnesses; predominantly HIV/AIDS. "I was so taken by just hanging out with those courageous people. In spite of all the odds being against them, there was a strength and beauty about them that actually fed into my spirituality," described Mark. He sought out a similar program in Minneapolis/St. Paul. "Clare Housing was at the front of the list when I Googled "AIDS" in Minneapolis; I called Lee right away," he said.

"I was so impressed with Mark's gentleness when I met him," recalls Lee Haugee, volunteer coordinator. "Little did I know that he would become one of my busiest volunteers!" Originally, Mark signed up to cook two nights a month. "It wasn't because I was a great cook. It just seemed that would be the best way to be invited into people's lives. Meals are a sacred time; people relax and share."

Because Mark is an engineer, it was a challenge for him to not control the order of things while he was at Clare. "James always comes down to set the table and chat. It is sometimes difficult for my engineer mind to listen and not have complete and quiet control while I am trying to time the dinner. Once again, I am the learner and receiver - more of the little stories that are unveiled each time I'm there."

Before long, Mark was coming early or staying late to tackle weeds in the yard. Here he was often joined by resident Vicki who loves the garden, being outside and sharing her stories. Fall came and Mark enlisted a group of friends to join him for Saturday leaf raking.

Marks' wife Alison and two daughters Elle, 5 and Kate 3, occasionally join him on the Saturday visits. On Thanksgiving this year the whole Bishop family joined the residents for a visit. "The girls loved the visit and really warmed up to the residents. We took pictures and laughed. I got a great picture of the girls with Vicki and gave her a copy for her room."

On Christmas, the family was scheduled for a Christmas Day visit but it had to be cancelled when they heard that one of the residents had passed away that morning. "It was a one of those unexpected real life experiences for my girls," said Mark. "Death is always hard to talk about but they seemed to understand."

So now we have Mark the cook, gardener, listener, fence builder, grounds keeper and donor - but that's not all. Mark took the story of Clare Housing to the foundation at his work resulting in a \$4,500 grant. And he is a founding member of the Vineyard Community, a small community of faith that provides service to others as a part of their mission. Clare Housing has been a recipient of their generosity as well!

When asked what other organizations Mark gives his time and energy to, Mark replied, "Clare House is my only focus. I like to go deep and really get into the mission and messages of the organization. Giving a lot to one place feels more important to me personally than giving a little, to many places."

Thank you, Mark, for being the kind of guy to dig deep. Each time that you come to Clare House, our residents experience the love and home-like atmosphere that makes Clare Housing unique and our volunteers critical to our success. Your generosity is incredible.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Volunteers play an important role at Clare Housing. We rely on their generous spirit to cook meals at the homes each evening, to help in the office, to raise awareness about HIV and AIDS, to run errands for the homes, and much, much more..

Do you have a talent to share? We need you.

Clare Housing is currently looking for additional volunteers in these areas:

- Cooks to prepare an evening, family-style meal in the homes
- Office support at our administrative offices in northeast Minneapolis
- Gardening, housekeeping and errands
- Assistance at Clare Apartments
- Tech saavy intern

Offer your professional skills, i.e. hair cuts, tax services, holistic therapies, etc.

Interested in learning more?

Contact Lee Haugee, Event and Volunteer Manager, at: lee.haugee@clarehousing.org or by phone at 612-236-9527.

She will be happy to tell you more about volunteering with Clare Housing.

EVENTS



The Triangle of Hope crew at a recent fundraiser for Clare Housing.

TRIANGLE OF HOPE'S ENERGY GENERATES FUNDING FOR CRITICAL PROJECTS

This committed group of performers and organizers has been getting all dressed up and singing their hearts out for over a decade. They do it for fun, but their intentions are serious. They raise funds for causes close to their hearts and have supported many HIV/AIDS organizations in town. Their support of our homes began over a decade ago and has remained strong all these years thanks to their ongoing commitment to the comfort of our residents.

Recent projects supported by the group include the renovation of the kitchen at Agape Home and helping to furnish it; purchasing grills, outdoor furniture and living room sets for various homes and replacing worn carpeting. Funds from their last two shows will go toward the renovation of the bathroom at Damiano House, which will finally be fully handicapped accessible. Thank you to all the performers, organizers and fans of Triangle of Hope for everything you do for the residents of Clare Housing.



Gosh Alice Jones, Lee Haugee, Miss Richfield, Jeffrey Roy and Barbie Q entertain the crowd.

WISH LIST THANK YOU

Many thanks to our friends who donated items on our wish list over the winter including: Mikayla Althaus, Gretchen Briggs, Hudie Broughton, Bill Hubbard, Sigrid Glasoe, Tim Falencik, Jason Fitzloff, guests at Bryon Gongaware's holiday party, Roseanne Halloran, Mary Jensen, Yvonne Larson, Don McClung and Anne Harvell, Mark Norris, Rich Olson, Barb Pearson, Betsy Portman, Ann Potter, Patti Siefert, Keith Smith, Stacey Starkka, Micha Strom, Barbara Taylor, Alex Wilhelm, and the many donors who responded to our plea for women's clothing for two of our female residents!

BINGO A-GOGO IS GROWING!

*WATCH FOR FUN NEW
ELEMENTS IN THE FALL.*

Check out www.bingoagogo.com to learn more, see photos, buy tickets or sponsor a game.

BINGO HIGHLIGHTS

Bingo A-Go-Go attendees had a blast at Mardi Gras Bingo, held at the Zurah Shrine Center on March 1. Miss Richfield 1981 led the evening's festivities with her signature flair, entertaining the crowd while she read the numbers and chided her guest game callers and volunteers. The event raised critical funds for Clare Housing and Park House, the benefiting partners of Bingo A Go-Go.

Spring Prom Bingo was held on May 10. Check out pictures on the Bingo A Go-Go website.

TEAM CLARE IN THE MN AIDS WALK

Staff members, residents, family and friends of Clare Housing gathered at Minnehaha Falls on Sunday, May 18th for the 20th annual AIDS Walk and the inaugural Run for the Ribbon. Team Clare members joined thousands of other participants as they made their way along the scenic route, raising awareness of and funding for Clare Housing programs. Many walked in memory of a loved one they have lost to AIDS and many more walked for someone living with HIV. All walked hoping that someday HIV transmission will be prevented and they will not need to walk.

Thank you to the Minnesota AIDS Project for extending this opportunity to Clare Housing! Team Clare members had a great day. The 2008 Minnesota AIDS Walk with the Inaugural 10k Run for the Ribbon was Sunday, May 18 at Minnehaha Park.



JOIN TEAM CLARE IN THE RED RIBBON RIDE JULY 17-20, 2008

Team Clare will be joining hundreds of other riders and crew members as they pedal nearly 300 miles through southern Minnesota this summer. The team members will raise awareness and critical funding for people living with HIV/AIDS, including programs here at Clare Housing.

Interested in learning more about the ride? Wondering if you could ride 300 miles in four days? Think you have what it takes to support this effort as a crew member? Visit www.redribbonride.org and consider joining Team Clare!



WANTED: CLARE HOUSING SUSTAINERS With a monthly contribution to Clare Housing you will provide ongoing support to our programs serving low-income individuals and families with HIV/AIDS while helping us reduce printing and mailing expenses. It's a win-win! Sign up today online at www.clarehousing.org under Support our Work/Donations/Become a Sustainer or by returning the envelope attached to this newsletter.



THE CLARION

is a publication for friends of Clare Housing, a 501(c)3 non-profit provider of care, services and housing for people living with HIV/AIDS.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE Executive Director



Our new logo emphasizes that AIDS is no longer a destination; it is a path and a journey. On that journey, people's lives transform and change. Some people's health improves and they are able to embrace increased independence or re-engage in the work force. Others face declining health and, even, death. Nevertheless transformations occur – in individuals, families and friends – as people face all the challenges of living with AIDS.

After our merger in January 2006 we spent a year and a half stabilizing and improving our services and infrastructure in order to continue our work from a solid position. We are ever more committed to our mission – creating housing opportunities for PLWH/A and the services needed that allow our residents to live life as fully as possible.

We have done that and have now established a five year strategic plan which includes:

- Seek to create a scattered-site housing program, in which Clare Housing master leases already existing apartments that will provide affordable housing and case management to targeted groups.
- Develop a second supportive housing project, similar to Clare Apartments, that includes home health services.
- Expand and/or enhance the continuum of housing opportunities for PLWH/A. This will be accomplished by the first two goals as well as by assessing gaps in the system and identifying individuals who are currently not served well or “fall through the cracks.”

In the ten months since establishing those goals, we have already accomplished the following:

- Scattered-site: We have established a new program, Project Cornerstone, which provides scattered-site housing options for ten individuals and families that have experienced long-term

homelessness. We hope to double the capacity of this program in 2009.

- Single-site development: We are about to close on a property near the Lake Street Light Rail Station for our next single-site development. The goal of this new program is to provide supportive housing to 45 low-income individuals with assisted living on-site.
- Enhancing the continuum of housing with service options: This summer we will remodel one of our foster care homes to provide an apartment for an on-site, over-night caregiver. Rather than 24-hour awake staff, this will allow us to have asleep staff at night – providing a less intensive and less expensive level of care than our other homes. This setting will be targeted to individuals who need the support of a small home-like setting with low staff-to-resident ratio, but don't need around-the-clock care.

We could not have done any of this work without the support from the community. We are only able to continue and expand our work because of the involvement, support and engagement of the community – those who volunteer their time, make financial contributions or just spread the word. Your donation of time and resources is critical to our work. **Thank you.**

2007 REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

Following two years of intensive growth, the 2007 fiscal year proved to be a year of continued quality care and programming for our residents, as well as intensive internal planning as we laid the groundwork for the next phase of housing and service expansion for people living with HIV/AIDS in the Twin Cities.

2007 Accomplishments

Care Homes/ Clare Housing served 30 individuals in our six adult 24-hour care homes in 2007.

Program outcomes:

- Provided 24-hour hands-on health care and nurturing support to 30 residents
- Maintained an estimated 95% adherence rate with HIV medications, decreasing the level of HIV in their system and improving their health
- Assisted three people as they transitioned out of our 24-hour care homes into more independent living
- Provided compassionate end of life care to two individuals
- Provided specialized care to five residents living with traumatic brain injuries and AIDS.

Clare Apartments/ Clare Housing served 37 residents at Clare Apartments in 2007. Eleven of those individuals were homeless before moving into Clare Apartments. **Program outcomes:**

Housing stability

- 68% retained housing for 2 years or more
- 90% of formerly homeless tenants have retained housing for more than a year

(17% higher than the Department of Housing and Urban Development's national objectives)

Increased skills/income

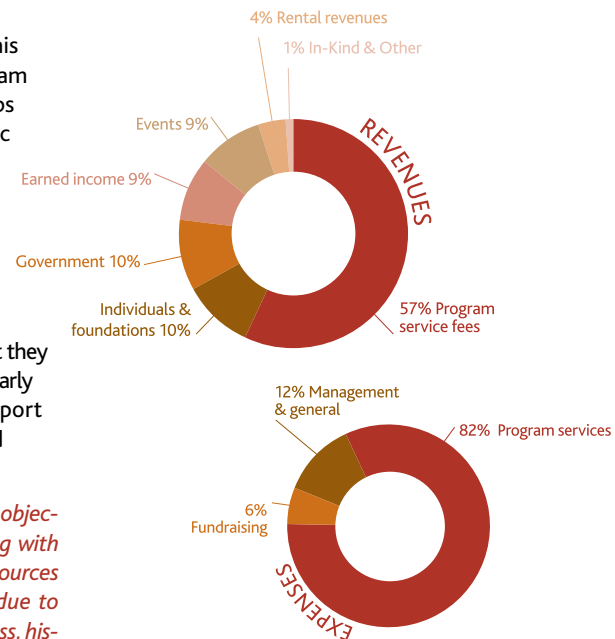
- One formerly homeless tenant completed a job training program
- One formerly homeless tenant began his two-year post-secondary degree program
- 10 (29%) tenants work at part-time jobs
- 17 (50%) received referrals to economic assistance, nutrition programs and/or received assistance with completing applications to receive benefits

Increased self-determination

- Eleven clients participated in the assisted living program
- All formerly homeless residents report that they attend appointments with physicians regularly
- 90% of formerly homeless residents report improved adherence to medication and improved T cell counts and viral loads.

We are clear and focused on our mission and objectives. Our target population is people living with HIV/AIDS who have very limited access to resources and who have often been marginalized due to poverty, chemical dependency, mental illness, his-

stories of abuse or incarceration. Our objective is to provide the highest quality supportive housing in a cost-effective manner. Clare Housing is pleased to report on the 2007 fiscal year and welcomes inquiries related to our work.



Resident Profiles

Clare Housing provided affordable housing, supportive services and compassionate care to 76 diverse individuals during the last year. Their stories are each unique and memorable. A few of our residents have graciously agreed to share their story. These will be published in the Clarion and on our website in the months to come.



Jimmy's Story

A JOURNEY FROM SIMPLY SURVIVING TO THRIVING

Jimmy grew up in Chicago as no stranger to adversity. He fled an abusive and impoverished home life as a teenager in the 1980's. He had been living on the streets for many years when he discovered he had a brain tumor. He had five surgeries on the tumor in all, with one of the surgeries leaving him severely debilitated. He was paralyzed on the right side of his body and blind. "I woke up, and the doctors were like, 'Hey at least you're alive.'" And that's what Jimmy figured, "At least I'm alive." His doctors were amazed when he regained use of that side of his body five weeks later.

Despite this remarkable recovery that stunned his doctors, Jimmy was not able to overcome the multiple chemical addictions that kept him homeless. He returned to the streets after leaving the hospital, and lacking a permanent address, it took Jimmy's doctor six months to reach him with the news that he was HIV positive. "I was frightened, because in those days everybody was dying, nobody was living. So I figured, might as well party more... I was only 21 years old and all they had to treat it was AZT." Jimmy continued, "The doctor just told me I had HIV. He didn't say 'Do you want help?' or 'Do you want a counselor?'" He told me, we did the check-up, and I left. I suppose he figured I'd be dead soon enough."

Jimmy describes the following years as the worst time in his life. He says, "I was prostituting myself, and I was using more drugs, sleeping in hallways, just doing anything to survive". In 2002, Jimmy moved to Minneapolis where he found himself homeless once again. He was sleeping on a back porch, in hallways, or under cars, attempting to keep warm through bitter Minnesota winters. He returned to prostitution, using any money he made on drugs. He



was afraid to go to a shelter. "I wasn't about to go a shelter, which sounds really crazy because I was putting myself in danger anyway." By 2004, Jimmy's health was deteriorating. His weight had dropped to a skeletal 135 pounds, and he had persistent skin lesions covering his body.

Jimmy describes the first time he met June Lingle-Haas, a nurse who was helping with applications for Clare Apartments. "I was in the hospital at HCMC when a nice woman named June came to see me. I was a mess, I looked horrible. She told me about Clare Housing. She said, 'You're one of the first people applying for this place. But the only way I can send your application through is if you do your 30 days and get yourself clean,'" described Jimmy.

"By that point I had already decided enough is enough," said Jimmy. He went into a treatment facility and after completing his 30-day program he moved into Clare Apartments in fall of 2005 with his partner. Together they worked on creating a home, staying clean and finding a job. He helped begin a weekly Narcotics Anonymous meeting at the apartments. He secured a part-time job and quickly gained the respect of his supervisors for his hard work and dependability. With this came more hours and responsibility at work. At home he enjoyed home-cooked meals, walking his dog and working out in the workout room that he helped to set up at the apartments. His health continued to improve.

Once his life and health stabilized, he decided it was time to make room for someone else who needed his apartment more than him. He told Lee Lewis, Clare Housing's executive director, "I said, you know, I really love being here," Jimmy recalls, "but I think it's time for us to move on so somebody else can get this apartment. And {Lee} told me to think about

*"I always say I
wouldn't be here if it wasn't
for God, Clare Housing,
and myself."*

—Jimmy

it. He said, 'Be sure. Are you ready?' I said, I'm all the readier I can get." Jimmy and his partner stayed at Clare Apartments for a year and half before moving into their own place in the neighborhood.

Today, Jimmy has been clean for over two years. He works full-time and has managed his HIV treatment so successfully that he has reduced his current HIV viral load to non-detectable levels.

Jimmy smiles broadly, his dark cheeks radiating an impossibly youthful glow. "I always say I wouldn't be here if it wasn't for God, Clare Housing, and myself – and I always put God first and Clare Housing second, because it took both of them to get me where I'm at, and it took myself to get motivated."

Jimmy's story is a great example of the success of Clare Housing's programmatic expansion aimed at serving HIV+ individuals who are able to live independently but have not been able to find housing they could afford or the support they needed to succeed.



Clare Housing executive director, Lee Lewis chats with Kathy and Dick Hanousek at 20th anniversary reception.

Reflection 20 Year Anniversary continued from page 1

home would later become known as Samaritan House and finally Damiano House. Although Clare Housing's Damiano House was the first care home in the Twin Cities, many more followed. Grace House opened shortly thereafter (1990) as did Agape Home (1993) and Clare House (1996). All of these individual homes had the same vision, to provide a safe place where people living with HIV/AIDS could live and pass away with dignity. In the late 1990's two more homes were built, Grace House II (1998) and Agape Dos (1999). Individual homes merged into organizations to streamline resources. Eventually, services were expanded to serve people living with HIV/AIDS and planning began for Clare Apartments, a 32-unit apartment building providing affordable housing and supportive services for people living with HIV/AIDS. Clare Apartments opened in 2005 and Project Cornerstone was launched in 2008.



Look for Clare Housing at these
Upcoming events:

Twin Cities Pride Festival,
June 28-29

MN Red Ribbon Ride, July 17-20



929 Central Avenue NE
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*“We can throw stones,
complain about them,
stumble on them,
climb over them,
or build with them...”*

—William Arthur Ward