



Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network

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Director's Comments...

by Tim Thorne

Following much discussion the GIHN board has decided that we will no longer be printing a quarterly newsletter but instead publishing an annual report in February and a semi-annual report in August. This current publication has been put together by our newest staff person, Emmy Lou Helmuth. In this annual report you will find an article on a host church, a GIHN guest and a profile of our most recent addition to the Board, Steve Garboden. Also included here is an annual report on the activities of GIHN in 2005. First, however, I have taken this opportunity to share a few of my thoughts as I begin my seventh year with GIHN.

On January 1, I celebrated—or rather noted the fact—that I have been in my current position with Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network for 6 years. As the director of this ministry I have met many wonderful people, guests, volunteers, board members and staff. My children often say that I know everybody in Goshen, which I assure them is not true; but I do know a huge number of good folks who are committed to their community and to their beliefs.

Of all the aspects of my work with GIHN the thing that I find most comfortable is working within the framework of ministry. It is, however, also the thing with which I struggle the most. As a ministry we are free to operate much as we please—to help however we can and to know that there are many folks surrounding us who are willing to support us with whatever resources they have available. Because most of our money comes from the church and its people, the state has very little say in what we do. To be sure, because we get some government money we are prohibited from discriminating in our admissions, and we are not permitted to evangelize in the traditional sense of the word. But these limitations do not prevent GIHN from being a true ministry—servants of God who, by his law, are not to judge other people, and by our interpretation, to do our witnessing primarily through deeds rather than words.

As a ministry we set our sights differently than a public social service agency might. By relying on collecting fees and garnering state monies, the staff of public social service agencies often have less propriety over what they do and they generally are forced to determine their success by outcomes defined in measurable terms. When I was a provider in a public service agency an often difficult and sometimes frustrating question was “who is the true client?": the one receiving services or the one signing the checks?

As a ministry we gauge success less in terms of what the “client” does but rather by what we do. Ideally, what we do is exceed the expectations of the client by not only delivering a meal and a safe place to spend the night, but by doing so with joy and love – with the abundance of Christ flowing from us to fill the space that exists between our lives and the lives of those whom we are serving. Ideally, we serve sacrificially – putting the needs of others above our own. And, ideally, we



Empty Bowl Soup & Bread Dinner



to benefit

Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network

Saturday, February 25, 2006

5pm to 7:30pm

Mill Race Farmer's Market

212 W. Washington

\$15 for a handmade bowl, delicious soup of your choice, bread and beverage provided by area restaurants and guild members

Sponsored by: **Goshen Clay Artists' Guild**

do this as part of the outpouring of our church family standing on the shoulders of those who are offering prayers and other forms of support as we serve this meal or spend this time in my church family home.

Operating as ministry does, however, lend itself for me to at least one glaring tension. How do I respond when GIHN is invited to speak at a gathering and encouraged to tell a few “success stories”? To be honest, I typically fall in line and talk about the family who is now living securely and doing well, thereby suggesting that this new-found stability is the result of GIHN’s contact with the family. This inference, however, is a large leap. Despite many of us finding it difficult to be excited about the true successes of ministry – in the instance of GIHN, we are successful whenever we serve a child a meal or offer a warm place for that child to spend the night.

As a Christian for less than a third of my life and as the son of a working class father, I live with the tension of responding as perhaps a Christian should, with little regard for “measurable outcomes”. My default is such that I often become quite interested in such concepts as enabling, accountability, opportunity and finite resources. It is perhaps my plight in life that I was born in this land of opportunity, educated in state schools, steeped in political ideology and have spent most of my working life employed in public services agencies. In short, I have been acculturated to believe that we should help the poor with the expectation that doing so will free them to pursue their “middle class” values. This mind-set is concerned with a “return on investment” and it easily lends itself to seeing the poor as suspect. It is, however, a mind-set that I think should not be summarily dismissed.

Ministry, by comparison, has no time clock and is not concerned with a ledger. Ministry is not troubled when those asking for help return and continue to ask until they themselves have been released through the power of God to serve others. We do not need to be concerned with whether or not the person holding their hand out does so because of a legitimate need or as a result of some desire to manipulate. However, inherent in this process is the faith aspect of ministry – this is where as ministers we “let go and let God.” This is a grand and glorious concept measured in eternity and not in the bottom line. In the end, there really are no success stories at least by our traditional way of defining these things.

Our Needs List

Immediate needs:

- Laundry detergent
- Diapers – sizes 4 and 5
- Pull-ups for both girls and boys
- Coffee – Maxwell House, no decaf

On-going needs:

- Paper towels
- Table napkins
- Cleaning supplies – Mr. Clean, 409, toilet bowl cleaner, Windex
- Kitchen-size garbage bags
- Hair brushes
- Stamps
- Copier, fax, and printer paper

We also appreciate **gift cards** from grocery stores, drug stores, gas stations, and Wal-Mart and Meijer. These come in very handy when we have a specific need, i.e. a child needs a pair of pajamas, or a sick baby needs Pedialyte, or someone gets a job and needs work clothes, or needs gas to get to work.

Welcoming New GIHN Board Member

We are very excited to welcome Steve Garboden to the Goshen Interfaith Board. Steve lives in the western part of Goshen. He and his wife Susan have 4 children, aged 19 to 29. Steve graduated from Goshen College in 1974 and the University of Notre Dame in 1985. He and his wife served two years in voluntary service in the mountains of southwestern Virginia during the mid '70s.

Steve and his family are long time attenders at Berkey Avenue Mennonite Fellowship. Susan and Steve have participated with the Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network ministry at Berkey since its inception in Goshen.

Steve is employed at Mennonite Mutual Aid as the Senior VP of Health. Currently he is also serving as interim President. He is in his 30th year of employment at MMA.

Current GIHN Board Members:

John Auer	Richard Litwiller	Myron Schrag
Gordon Dyck	Anne Miller	David Young
Steve Garboden	Carol Miller	Peter Salvesson
Greg Hartzler	Janice Eigsti Miller	Rose Shetler



GIHN 2nd Annual Golf Outing

Friday, June 9, 2006

At

Spring Meadow Farm Golf Club

For more information please contact the Day Center at 574-534-2300

The Journey of One GIHN Guest: “A New Beginning”

By Willie Mae Grant

My name is Willie Mae Grant, I'm from Charleston, South Carolina. I have a 5 year old son. His name is Kar'Dai, he attends Chandler Elementary. We have had a rough life the past three years. Three years ago I lost a nice job. Then we lost our apartment after that and nothing seem to go my way except being back in the Lord's house. It was rough living from place to place so I was given the opportunity to leave Charleston. I was scared at first, but I said it got to be something better than this. At first I was in Illinois but that didn't work out so I ended up in Elkhart, Indiana. The Tuesday after Thanksgiving I was staying with my grandson's mother, but then it turned out I couldn't stay there anymore because I didn't want her to lose her place. She called Interfaith and got me an appointment cause she was there when she first came to Indiana. I came to Goshen Interfaith December 27 and this is where I've been ever since. I've gotten an extended thirty day stay until I can find me a part time job and housing. I'm currently enrolled in G.E.D. classes and from there I'm going for my C.N.A. certificate so I can get a good paying job and become a productive citizen of Goshen, Indiana. I want to thank Miss Andrea Yoder cause she encouraged me to go ahead to G.E.D. classes. I got lost trying to find the location, but Emmy Lou got me there. Thank you very much for the help. God Bless.

Statistics About Goshen Interfaith Hospitality Network

By Tim Thorne

In 2005 GIHN provided emergency shelter to 30 families. This number is comparable to the past four years after having a significant decrease in the number of families sheltered between calendar year 2001 and 2002. Coincidentally, the average length of stay over the past four years has remained relatively stable and continues to be somewhat higher than it had been when GIHN was serving predominantly families relocating to this area to seek employment. Of the 30 families that we served in 2005, 19 were from Elkhart County. In 2005 three of our families moved to this area explicitly for public housing opportunities and another three families returned to GIHN from other areas of the country after having been admitted to shelter with GIHN in previous years. One family relocated to this area for employment and four of our families simply arrived in the Goshen area as a result of established patterns of transient.

Of significant importance is that of the 30 families sheltered in 2005, 20 maintained contact for at least some period of time with GIHN staff and/or volunteers after being discharged from the program. It should also be noted that 2005 was the first year in our ten years of operation that no family was asked to leave the shelter program.

GIHN Statistics

	<u>2004</u>	<u>2005</u>
Sheltered Families	33	30
Residents of Goshen	12	7
Average Length of Stay	32.37	31.33
Adults	48	44
Children	74	64
Guests Moving into Permanent Housing	17	13
Cars Donated to GIHN	11	8
Cars Provided to Guests*	6	1

*Cars are provided only for Guests who have financial stability such that they can operate the vehicle legally and safely.

Celebrating Martin Luther King Jr. Day by Sarah Roth

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day, two families from Goshen Interfaith joined me on the Goshen College campus to participate in the events commemorating this national holiday. In the conversations that followed, guests recalled different highlights of the events. All agreed that the overwhelming highlight was the chance to listen to the powerful voices of Voices 'n' Harmony, Goshen's Gospel Choir. "I loved the choir," said Vashonna Dixon, "because they could sing. They made me feel the same way I feel about all music – I feel good."

Others enjoyed *Breaking Ice*, a Minneapolis-based drama troupe that encouraged us to examine stereotypes and racism in our everyday interactions. "They reminded me that you shouldn't judge people by just looking at them," said Elika Dixon. "Everybody is different and everyone has a story – and you'll never know a person's story unless you talk to them." Though much of the program involved improvisation, *Breaking Ice* had done demographical research on Goshen, and incorporated especially relevant issues such as job discrimination, and the stereotypes that lace our language. "They should do more than just that day," added another guest. "Why wait until his birthday to discuss the issues?"

The children especially enjoyed International Story-Teller, Vernell Ball-Daniel whose story, "Only One Person," paid a tribute to Rosa Parks. She emphasized the importance of seemingly small actions in the struggle for racial equality. After the events we all enjoyed the fine dining at the Goshen College cafeteria. Guests had a chance to "be college students" and fill their trays from the many buffet lines. Martin Luther King Jr. Day was enjoyed by all, and the themes continue to be a part of conversation at the Day Center.

Our Host Churches by Emmy Lou Helmuth

The ministry of Goshen Interfaith is supported by 18 churches in the Goshen area. What a beautiful example of the body of Christ working together to serve those in need. We here at Interfaith have the opportunity each week to see how unique each host church is in their service, organization, and leadership and we want to begin sharing that with you. Our hope is that with each Annual Report we will feature a different church, allowing us all to be encouraged and learn a little more about how the body of Christ is using its hands and feet.

Eighth Street Mennonite Church has been hosting Goshen Interfaith since the ministry began ten years ago. Now Eighth Street Mennonite and St. John the Evangelist Church have been partnering together for more than six years to host Interfaith guests at Eight Street Mennonite. They see this partnership as a beautiful opportunity for their congregations to work together. Each week that these churches host there are volunteers from both churches preparing meals, hosting in the evenings, and hosting overnight.

To begin preparing for their week of hosting the Eighth Street and St. John Coordinators prepare a poster board listing all the volunteer jobs available for that specific week. This board is posted four weeks prior to hosting along with printed job descriptions of each volunteer position so that new volunteers may feel more comfortable becoming part of the ministry.

Coordinators for GIHN are the men and women who organize their church's hosting week. One unique aspect of St. John and Eighth Street is their rotating coordinators team. These two churches have a team of five coordinators that each serve a three year term. Every year there is one member finishing their term and a new member coming onto the team. Eighth Street and St. John have seen very positive effects of having a rotating team. They say a great benefit to organizing a team in this way is that following their terms many past coordinators choose to become involved in volunteering. Currently the members of their coordinating team are the following: Mauveen Coyne, Laura Funk, Jeannette Bechtel, Lew & Ann Nayler, and Delores Bartel. There are also two members of Eighth Street Mennonite on the GIHN board: Greg Hartzler and Myron Schrag. Thanks, St. John's and Eighth Street, for being a part of this ministry.

Our Current Host Churches

Assembly Mennonite
Berkey Ave. Menn .Fellowship
College Mennonite
Clinton Frame Mennonite
East Goshen Mennonite Church
Faith Mennonite
Goshen City Church of the Breth.
North Goshen Mennonite
Siloam Mennonite Fellowship
Silverwood Mennonite
St. John the Evangelist Church
St. Mary's Antiochian Orthodox
Trinity Lutheran Church
Walnut Hill Mennonite
Waterford Mennonite Church
Yellow Creek
Zion Chapel
8th Street Mennonite

Thank-You to Cot-Movers

In December we said good-bye to a very important but often over-looked and under-thanked part of our ministry; our cot-movers. These are the guys who, for the last ten years, have moved our cots from church to church every Sunday afternoon. With monies recently received from a grant, GIHN has purchased new cots, which can be folded up and moved between the churches by the guests themselves. So, to the following men and businesses we want to say a heartfelt "thank-you" and express our deepest appreciation for all the years of volunteer service you gave to GIHN, in helping to ensure that our families had something to sleep on every night.

Superior Laminating – Elroy Bontrager

Dutch Mills – Mark Liechty

Mica Shop – Mike Chupp

NBS Office Supplies – John Hess

Weiland Designs – Steve Yoder

Snyder Paints and Wallpaper – Greg Smucker

As one of our former 9-year-old guest would say, "thanks, guys, you're the best"!

New Staff Member Added

by Andrea Yoder

A third full-time person has been added to the staff at GIHN. Emmy Lou Helmuth began working here last fall in the position of Social Technician II. Emmy is from Gridley, Illinois, and is a graduate of Huntington College. She and her husband David, a Goshen College graduate, live here in Goshen, where they attend Life Spring Community Church. Emmy's interests are music, bike riding, outdoor sports, and travel.

Emmy is responsible for much of the day to day activities of our families, helping them organize their daily schedules, assisting with children, providing transportation. She also brings much-needed computer skills to our staff, and has had many opportunities to use these skills in our office. We are very happy that Emmy chose to join us!

With the addition of Emmy to our staff, as planned, I have assumed more responsibility in a number of areas. Perhaps the most exciting of these is my new quarter time role as Case Manager. This is something I will write more about at a future time.