

RAIHN

Weather Report

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Rochester Area
Interfaith
Hospitality
Network

RAIHN Mission

We are a not-for-profit, non-denominational group of faith communities helping homeless families achieve sustainable independence.

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Providing an Interfaith Solution for Homeless Families

Planning for the Future Success of RAIHN A Report from the President

Dear Friends and Colleagues

The RAIHN board had a very successful retreat on the 10th of November with an organizational development staff person from the national offices of Family Promise, the national Interfaith Hospitality Network parent organization.

We asked the question "What is our vision of future success?" And this is what we have discerned:

- **Greater diversity** in the board and faith community
- **Increased community awareness** of RAIHN
- **RAIHN is entrepreneurial** –business partners with families
- **RAIHN is a model of social justice and advocacy** – an example to the community of faith-based social action
- **Enhanced administration and operations** – addition of an admin assistant and four linked volunteers

Following a dynamic discussion of current priorities and future direction in relation to the existing plan the group agreed on the following strategic directions, replacing the eleven older areas with five:

- 1. Program and Services**
 - case management
 - scope of program
 - evaluation and assessment
- 2. Volunteer and Congregational Development and Nurture**
 - Volunteers
 - Clergy
 - Congregational communities and staff
- 3. Marketing and Fund Development**
 - Communication (internal/external including the website)
 - Fund development plan

Third Annual RAIHN Dinner Delights

The following comments were overheard at our 3rd annual RAIHN dinner last October 23rd at the Church of the Transfiguration in Pittsford: "This dinner is fun!" "These auction prizes are fantastic!" "Rod Frohman's PowerPoint presentation needs to go on the road!"

Part of the evening's program honored coordinators from each faith community. Once again, Tasteful Connections served an elegant and sumptuous feast. Erica Vera's perseverance and compassion had the audience laughing one minute and close to



4. Operations

- Personnel/staff
- Facilities - Day center and Bus

5. Governance – Board Development

- Recruit
- Orient
- Train and develop (ongoing)
- Review bylaws and policy
- Guide strategic planning efforts

We have added three new board members whose biographies are highlighted in this newsletter.

Beginning in January we are entering into the implementation phase of this new plan. We would welcome your input as to how we can implement the vision specifics as well as how we can maximize the use of this new organizational structure.

I am very excited and optimistic about how well we have done in almost 4 full years of operation. It is hard to believe that our Fourth Anniversary is coming up on May 1, 2008. Your ongoing volunteer support of your time, talent, and treasure has made RAIHN what is, and will make its future.

Roderic P. Frohman, President

RAIHN Guests attending the Dinner



tears the next. Beaded jewelry made by RAIHN guests became Christmas gifts. The wide variety of silent auction gifts appealed to many tastes. The RAIHN board expressed thanks for celebrating four years of making a difference in the lives of homeless families!

RIT Student Photography Show Raises RAIHN Profile

Last fall, RAIHN was asked to participate in a project on homelessness in Rochester being undertaken by an RIT Photojournalism class. Guest families gave consent and the work was shown at **Gallery r**, the RIT student gallery on Park Avenue. The show's title was Unseen Neighbors, Interpretations of Human Conditions. The show opened with a program of speakers that included **Erica Vera**, RAIHN Network Director. She was joined by other advocates: **Sr. Grace Miller** of House of Mercy which provides services to people who fall between the social support networks; **Loret Steinberg** of the Eastman Commons Community in Rochester and the Common Ground Organization in New York City; **Connie Sanderson**, the director of the Continuum of Care (a Rochester group responsible for a ten year plan to end homelessness here). **Hubert Wilkerson** - Rochester resident and **Valerie Sauers**,

one of the students who wrote about her changed impressions of homelessness after taking part in the project. An excerpt of Valerie's writing follows:

"Up until this fall, I had known very little at all about the issue of homelessness. I have been guilty of thinking that it was merely an issue of laziness on part of those it affected. I have been guilty of walking past people on the sidewalks of various cities, sometime giving my spare change and sometimes completely ignoring them.

They were people for whom I felt badly, but I was annoyed when they approached me in search of some money. I hated to look them in the face and tell them no, but how could I possibly give to all of them who asked for help? I was always led to believe that they probably had done something to deserve being where they were. Little did I know that I've been looking homeless people

in the face almost daily without ever knowing.

Working with RAIHN opened my eyes and allowed me to experience the lives of some of Rochester's "invisible homeless", the people we see all the time but don't realize that they have no place to call home.

This was an experience that can not be taught in a classroom or from a book, -nor can the effect on me be quantified. It is something that can only be learned in life. It will stay with me always.

The reason that I have been so deeply impacted was not because I gave my time to the program, but because of what I received. I am both lucky and grateful to the staff, volunteers and families of RAIHN for giving me this gift."



Can We Do More? *Six Ideas for RAIHN Volunteers*

By *Joanne Ligtenberg, Coordinator at Brighton Reformed*

If you are reading this you are already involved in RAIHN, but did you ever wonder how you could expand your gifts as a volunteer just a little more? I'm sure many of you have lots of ideas, but I have been asked to share a few of mine.

When guests are at your congregation you can involve yourself in the following ways:

1. Teach someone how to do a craft (knitting, crocheting or beading and provide the materials),
2. Read to a child, check their homework or help them with the tough parts,
3. Teach an adult a skill (how to drive, use a computer, speak English, or fill out a form). Don't forget some of these are marketable skills!

If you are willing to go outside of your congregation and your comfort level, you could,

4. Volunteer to drive someone

to an appointment (take Erica off the hook) 5. Find friends who can help with jobs, housing, or other opportunities.

When you think about offering to teach someone a new skill, think outside the box, consider;

6. Bring someone to work with you to help train them in your job. (Check with your employer first.) This would not only give them a marketable

skill but would also enhance their self-esteem.

The bottom line is that we shouldn't be afraid of opening ourselves up a little more and letting our guests know who we are by giving of our talents. Many of us are reluctant because volunteering also opens us up for disappointment and hurt. If we can make just a little difference how great that would be!

New Board Members – Malcolm Boyd, Wendy Rose and Susan Stanger

We are very delighted to welcome to our board three remarkably talented new members who bring experience and gifts in a diverse range of skills; Wendy Rose, Malcolm Boyd and Susan Stanger.

Malcolm Boyd is a law student at Franklin Pierce Law Center in Concord, New Hampshire and is a 2002 graduate of the University of Rochester. Currently he is working as a suicide and mental health crisis hotline technician at the Canandaigua Veterans Administration Medical Center in Canandaigua. He also brings experience in dealing with persistent mental illness and providing support services for those individuals. We welcome Malcolm to the board!

Wendy Rose is a longtime activist in the community and brings gifts for organizing events. During the past several years she has chaired or organized the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Greater Rochester Commission Corporate

Luncheon. She has done the same for many activities at Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, the National Council of Negro Women, and the Corn Hill Arts Festival where she lives. Currently Wendy is the Administrative Assistant at Covenant United Methodist Church. She has been the Clinical Research Coordinator for the University of Rochester, the Executive Director of Martin Luther King Commission and Director of Community Relations at Rochester Community Baseball, (the Red Wings.) She is a graduate of Wilberforce University and has a Special Certificate in public relations from RIT. Welcome to the board Wendy!

Susan Stanger is the Coordinator for RAIHN at Temple Sinai and guides a team of twelve volunteers who make up the RAIHN Team at Temple Sinai and their support congregation, St Joseph's Catholic Church. She has been a member of the Executive Committee of

the Board of Trustees for Temple Sinai for 4 years; she has also held the position of secretary for one year and Vice President of Social Action and Caring Community for 3 years.

Outside of Temple Sinai she was a member of the Religious Advisory Committee for Alternatives for Battered Women. During her tenure she helped to develop a training workshop for leaders of all faith communities. Because clergy are often "first responders" it is important that they be trained in how to best respond to victims of domestic violence.

Sue is also a member of the Interfaith Women's Tea Group. This group of Muslim, Christian and Jewish women has been meeting in each other's homes for the last 6 years, discussing beliefs and rituals that are common to the three religions. For the past 6 years she has been a substitute in the Pittsford School libraries. Welcome to the Board Susan!!!



Malcolm Boyd, Wendy Rose and Susan Stranger are three new board members

RAIHN by the Numbers – The Director's Report

	Number of Families	Number of Individuals	Number of Children	Adult Females	Adult Males	Bed Nights	Number of meals	Average Stay	Casework Interventions	Families placed permanent housing	Clients enrolled MCC	Clients enrolled in vocational education	Discharged	Adults placed in employment	Clients on permanent disability	Families placed in other shelters	Families placed with relatives	Returned to homelessness	trained volunteers	Remained in housing for one year minimum
5/1/04-12/31/04	36	100	56	35	9	2,688	8,062	32	25/family	24	6	11	7	18	5	2	3	2 of 24 families, 6 indivs	600	22 of 24
1/1/05-12/31/05	30	97	57	31	9	3,897	11,700	41	25/family	18	2	5	5	16	7	1	6	1 of 18, 2 individuals	550	17 of 18
1/06-12/06	36	123	74	34	15	3,884	11,652	28	25/family	26	0	0	1	20	11	0	7	0 of 26	130	25 out of 26 (96% of families)
1/07-12/07	27	90	51	26	13	4,120	12,360	41	25/family	22	2	5	2	13	10	0	4	0	120	100% in 2007
Total 4 yr stats	129	410	238	126	46	14,589	43,774	35 average	25/family	90	10	21	15	67	33	3	20	3 of 90	1,400	86 out of 90 families (96% of families)

Host Organizations

The hosts house and feed guest families for one-week periods about four times each year.

Asbury First United Methodist Church
 Brighton Reformed Church
 Church of the Assumption
 Downtown United Presbyterian Church
 First Unitarian Church
 First Universalist Church
 Irondequoit United Church of Christ
 Lutheran Church of the Incarnate Word
 St. Luke & St. Simon –
 Cyrene Episcopal
 St. Matthias Episcopal/Trinity Lutheran
 St. Paul's Episcopal Church
 Temple Sinai
 Third Presbyterian Church
 Trinity Emmanuel Lutheran

Supporting Organizations

Faith communities that provide in-kind and volunteer support to one of the hosting organizations.

Baber AME
 Baptist Temple
 Buddhist Peace Fellowship & Zen Center
 Christ Episcopal Church
 Church of the Epiphany
 Church of the Transfiguration
 First Presbyterian, Pittsford
 Messiah Lutheran Church
 Mountain Rise UCC
 New Life Presbyterian Church
 Redeemer Lutheran
 Religious Society of Friends
 Seneca United Methodist
 St. Catherine of Siena
 St. John's Lutheran
 St. Joseph Catholic Church
 St. Louis Catholic Church
 St. Mary's Catholic Church
 Summerville Presbyterian
 Trinity Reformed Church
 Twelve Corners Presbyterian
 United Church of Pittsford

The Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network, Inc. is a New York not-for-profit corporation with 501(c) 3 status. All donations are tax deductible.

Making it Work Together St. Paul's Hosts at First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford

*By Hank and Kathy
 Kingston, Coordinators at
 St. Paul's Episcopal Church*

Imagine for a few moments what the RAIHN families go through each and every week while in the program. Most of the adults live in hope that the next day is when they are told that housing has been approved and they can move their family into a place to stay. For the children, each day brings the thought of "Where is home today?"

This must be very frightening for each of them when there is no place to call "home", no wall to hang up their favorite picture, no closet for their clothes and belongings, and then having to sleep on the floor again and again. The RAIHN program gives them hope that soon things will change for the better, and their family can stay together.

Now from a different perspective, imagine having to host the RAIHN program for a week and your church facility is not available due to re-construction. In this situation logistics could be overwhelming. This is exactly what happened during this past Thanksgiving week with St. Paul's church as the host. The re-construction of the Sunday school building was behind schedule and there was no alternative to provide housing at St. Paul's. It looked as if St. Paul's might have to step out of the rotation

schedule.

After much communication with Erica Vera a plan was developed that allowed the RAIHN program to continue without schedule interruption. This plan brought together five different groups of people to help host the RAIHN families during the Thanksgiving week. The hosting church was the First Presbyterian Church of Pittsford. The host church required a lot of set up and preparation since this was their first time as a host facility. All the supplies, bedding, food, etc. had to be transported to Pittsford.

The RAIHN bus schedule had to change due to the longer travel times back to city. The volunteers came from St. Paul's, the Rochester Zen Center, and Twelve Corners Presbyterian Church, which has just become a new supporting congregation to St. Paul's. Faced with these challenges the people of First Presbyterian Church, Pittsford warmly welcomed the families, our volunteers willingly traveled to an unfamiliar location during a holiday week to support the families and the week went quite smoothly.

All of this happened through the commitment and time given by each and every one. As usual the RAIHN families had a place to call "home" for another week.



St Paul's Episcopal (above) worked with First Presbyterian of Pittsford (below) while renovations were being completed



Remember RAIHN is a United Way Agency

United Way Donors can now designate Rochester Area Interfaith Hospitality Network - RAIHN - as their official "designee".

The official RAIHN ID number is
2435.

Contributors can give through their place of employment or use the regular donor designation form.