



# HOME ... FOR NOW

Anne-Marie House  
180 Lowell Road  
Hudson, New Hampshire 03051-4907

A publication of the Greater Nashua Interfaith Hospitality Network, Inc. November 2006



## Director's Corner

Sr. Sue Bourret, New Hampshire Provincial Superior of the Sisters of the Presentation of Mary wrote:

***"May God continue to bless you and all who make GNIHN possible."***

I echo these sentiments to each and every one of you who support our program in so many important ways.

Although this could be the time to share with you some of our meaningful statistical accomplishments since moving to Anne-Marie House, I will save that for another article. I would rather take this opportunity to share with you what I see as those random acts of wonderfulness that are a daily part of living at Anne-Marie House. Although you may think you may not be "doing much" when you come here to volunteer, my guests think quite the opposite. The friendships that are made, the kind words that are spoken, the genuine caring of what happens to our families raises the spirits of our guests immeasurably. I believe that you, our volunteers, are God's hands in this special program. When a gift of helpfulness occurs – be it a smile of understanding, or a personal recommendation to a prospective landlord, you are shining God's love on a family so in need of feeling valued.

May God continue to bless you and all who make GNIHN possible!

Joyfully serving with you,

*Laurie*

## Connecting the Dots: Volunteers Mean a Lot

April and her six children were ready to leave Anne-Marie House. There was just one problem: they had nowhere to live. Enter Sue Stebbins, coordinator at the First Baptist Church in Nashua.

*"I overheard April saying she couldn't find an apartment,"* Sue recalled.

*"A friend of mine owns apartments in Nashua and Hudson, and she was renovating a four-bedroom unit. I explained to her about Anne-Marie House and about April and her children, and she said to have April call her."*

April recognized the phone number. She had called and left a message previously but no one returned her call. *"I told April to call again and to use Rich and Sue Stebbins as a reference, that we recommend her."*

That was all it took. April and her boyfriend went for the interview, which went very well. April loved the apartment and, thanks also to many others who donated furnishings and helped with the move, she and her family are now happily settled in their own home.

What can we learn from this experience? First, references are key in getting an apartment. *"My friend said that if the references aren't there, they move on to the next person,"* Sue explained. Second, we can all be alert to ways that we could help our families to connect the dots for their future. A comment overheard just might be the catalyst for helping another family find their way.



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## Developing Awareness: A Local Congregation Efforts



How can we communicate to our congregations what Anne-Marie House and the Greater Nashua Interfaith Hospitality Network are all about?

One approach is to have a Hospitality Sunday. The entire service is developed around the theme of hospitality and how that is lived through GNIHN at Anne-Marie House.

Last spring we had such a service at the Congregational Church of Amherst. The outcome was three new volunteers, renewed energy and enthusiasm among longtime volunteers and a better appreciation by the congregation of exactly what this program is that our church is helping to support.

Anne-Marie House volunteers wore special nametags and took part in all aspects of the service, as greeters and ushers, acolytes, liturgists and direct participants in presenting this particular mission of serving families in transition.

During Children's Time, children who come to Anne-Marie House with their parents when they volunteer talked about why they look forward to these visits. Chris Trudo, who had met with the children prior to the service, facilitated that discussion.

Several volunteers spoke briefly about why they participate in this program and what they have gained from it. A Litany of Hospitality, written by Chris Trudo, came near the close of the service. The Sunday bulletin contained an insert that listed the names of all of the volunteers, now and in the past, and summarized the history of this mission outreach.

A large sign greeted worshipers as they arrived at church with "Welcome to Hospitality Sunday!" Display boards using materials from Laurie and some that we created were put up in the community room for coffee hour. Photos from Anne-Marie House put on a CD played continuously on John Sotiriou's laptop computer. And guests were able to look through the album of Anne-Marie House and the participating congregations, as well as the pages in it created by the families in residence then.

We are grateful to our Senior Pastor, the Rev. Richard Leavitt, who patiently worked with us to create this service and incorporated the theme in all aspects, including the hymns, scripture, sermon and prayers.

*Carolyn Caprioglio*

## When you "take a chance" for homeless families.... You "take a stand" for hope and justice.

That's the theme for our raffle fundraiser this Fall. On November 19<sup>th</sup> the grand drawing will be held and two lucky winners get their pick of either \$1,000 of home heating oil, a \$1000 gasoline gift card, or \$1000 cash. All proceeds from ticket sales go directly to the GNIHN at Anne-Marie House. The drawing for the prize will be held at the Anne-Marie House on November 19.

Tickets are now on sale and modestly priced at \$5 each, 5 for \$20, and 15 for \$50. You can purchase tickets or help sell them by contacting any church coordinator. The seller of the most raffle tickets will be eligible for a \$500 donation in their name to a qualifying educational institution of their choice. The educational donation is made possible through the support of an anonymous sponsor and does not come from the proceeds of the raffle.

The Fund Raising Committee is open to additional sponsors who can help us offset the cost of the prizes with their support. If you think you know of an individual or organization that would consider supporting the raffle this way, please call Dennis St. Lawrence (603-305-0216).

### Plans for Fund Raising Events

The Fund Raising Committee of GNIHN has grown larger since last year and we are very excited about several projects we are developing. Besides the "Rock Out Homelessness" event at Rivier College on October 1, 2006, we are planning another children's show on January 14, 2007 at the Souhegan High School, a golf tournament in May 2007 at the Green Meadow Golf Club, and a dinner/dance gala in September 2007 at the Crown Plaza Nashua Hotel. Watch for more information on these and other projects as we move into our third year of operation this fall. If you are interested in joining our committee or helping with any one of these events, please contact Linda Jeynes (882-0731) or call the GNIHN office at 883-7338.

# Rivier Business Students Challenge GNIHN



Professor Eric Drouart and his graduate Business class in Strategic Management this semester challenged the GNIHN Board with their study of greater Nashua Community, local agencies that serve homeless people, and the work of Hospitality Network. Two power point presentations were made to members of the Board and the Director, Laurie Skibba on October 2 and 16 culminating in what the class called a "SWOT" analysis. In this analysis the Board members were made aware of strengths, weakness, opportunities, and threats that exist in the community and which impact the services of the Hospitality Network.

While presenting a number of statistics these facts stood out: In 2003 there were more than 900 homeless children in the state of New Hampshire. In 2000, in the greater Nashua area, 19.7% of female headed single parent households with children were in poverty. It is with this kind of information that the Board supports our program of emergency shelter for homeless families. Our interfaith approach to the need in our community brings access to a large number of volunteers and resources.

At the October 16 class meeting Laurie Sealund, Cami Czohara and Valentine Hooser presented specific recommendations to the Board. They presented these rec-

ommendations under the headings of Finance, Marketing Strategy, and Board Involvement and Improvement. These recommendations were presented in such a way that a link from where we are now could be fashioned to the GNIHN organization that we would like in a year, three years, and even in ten years. The Board expressed its gratitude to the students.

The interaction in the classroom and with Professor Drouart revealed the students are professionally employed in businesses where strategic management is practiced. They urged the Board to seek out partnerships with corporations and with Rivier College in order

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sharing our vision of the what can be done by the religious community in addressing one of the pressing needs of our time, homelessness.

## The Greater Nashua Interfaith Hospitality Network Donation Form

The Board of the Interfaith Hospitality Network is thankful for gifts of time and supplies that allow us to provide emergency shelter. We have an operating budget of over \$90,000 that comes from grants and the gifts of people who believe in providing shelter to the least of these our neighbors. Please use this form to make a financial donation.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone Number \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Amount of the Donation: (\$25) \_\_ (\$50) \_\_ (\$100) \_\_ ( ) \_\_

Does your employer match your donation? If so, check here \_\_\_\_\_