



The Bangor Area Homeless Shelter

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Annual Report

September 17, 2015

Fiscal Year 2015



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Mission Statement

It is the mission of the Bangor Area Homeless Shelter to support and strengthen the community by providing emergency shelter and supportive services to people who are homeless, or at risk and to advocate for collaborative, locally driven solutions to end homelessness.

Vision Statement

It is the vision of the BAHS to be a leading partner in insuring that no person in the Grater Bangor area ever has to spend a night on the streets or in the woods because he or she cannot find or cannot afford safe housing. We believe in the principle that safe, affordable housing is a fundamental human right and our primary aim is to offer a stabilizing base and support for homeless men and women as they transition back into the community. We believe that services offered should actively involve those in need of assistance, be of high quality and be delivered with dignity and respect. Our concern is for both emergency care and the development of affordable housing for all.

President's Annual Report
Fiscal Year 2014

On behalf of the entire Board of Director's, I would like to say Thank You to all of our volunteers, donors and to the people of the region we serve. All of you provide us the necessary time, supplies and monies needed to operate day in and day out.

The Board is also grateful to the hard working employees of our Shelter. This staff continues to deliver exceptional personal care to those we serve and provide encouragement, outreach and needed direction for our clients.

As many of you know, Dennis Marble is retiring after 20 years of exceptional service to the Shelter. We send our heartfelt thanks to Dennis for his commitment and professional service to all of those he served over the years. Dennis counseled countless minds, bodies and spirits with his direct humanitarian approach and with his ability to understand the needs of our clients.

Rowena Griffin, Ro, will be leading the Shelter as of January 2016 and the board is pleased to have Rowena on board as the Shelter's new Executive Director. Rowena will bring her experience to this position and keep our Shelter moving in the positive direction Dennis has generated. Ro also brings in new perspectives and her own unique style of providing care to those we serve.

Funding is on track again this year and as previously stated, we thank all of our generous donors. The Shelter continues to serve the greater Bangor community with temporary shelter, housing assistance, meals and clinical services. Because of the generosity of our community, the Shelter is on track to maintain all services and programs and even add some part-time help to continue the much needed outreach to our clients.

I look forward to continuing to serve as president of the Board of Directors and to work with a great team of people – staff, board, volunteers – who are grateful to have the opportunity to serve our clients and community.

Sincerely,
John Dougherty, President

Executive Director's Annual Report to the Corporation

Traditionally, this is where I would relate the major events and developments of the past year. Instead, as I near the end of my formal relationship with BAHS, forgive my indulgence in sharing some memories from years ago. Thinking about those early years also got me appreciating those folks who found the commitment and wherewithal to open and begin operating the Greater Bangor Area Shelter in 1986. Initially at least the Board of Directors was completely hands on—it was them volunteering with one paid shelter manager. Wow! My first year as executive director had me scrambling, confronted with problems to solve that I'd never dealt with before. Some that come to mind:

- A 2:00 a.m. phone call about burst pipes; we'd eventually figure out that there was an old and still open hole from a dryer vent that was letting air, including that at 25 below, blow on the copper plumbing in the Cedar Street basement.
- Landing on the realization in February '96 that 3 of the then 8 staff positions were funded with a one-year, non-renewable emergency grant from Maine Housing that would expire in May.
- Talking on the phone in my office one early April morning and peripherally seeing glittering crystals fall outside the window. After the call was completed I went out and checked the sidewalk. In reaction to seeing shards of glass all over the sidewalk, I then grabbed a flashlight and went upstairs to the door that led to the stairway to the third floor (the unlighted, unheated third floor). When I reached the top and looked down the hallway to my left I saw something large, lying on the floor. A little afraid of what it might be, I saw that it was a pile of snow that had accumulated under the skylight that was missing a pane. That hole had helped create a rush of air that would come off the sidewalk and up through the stairwells where it created enough of a pressure differential that one of the original arched windows had been sucked out of its frame so it could fall by my window and shatter. All I could think of was a possible headline, "Shelter Window Kills Young Mother and Baby." This event led to several years of having all the third floor window glass replaced with plywood inserts thanks to Robby Speirs and Habitat for Humanity.
- Realizing I had a ton to learn about guest profiles and shelter limits about who we might and might not serve. I remember an early morning when a station wagon (remember them?) pulled up outside the Main Street door and a young man was dropped off (the car hurried away). Thinking it was my job to lead a compassionate effort here and to fly by the seat of my heart, I gave him a bed for the night. It turned out that he had had a traumatic brain injury and had multiple diagnoses that included Intermittent Explosive Disorder. After he had provided us more than a few significant challenges the first night, I started working the phone, trying to find an alternative facility. He got wind of what I was doing and locked himself in one of our bathrooms (the one that used to have a shower); when he exited, he had left a broken mirror and blood and feces smeared all over

the walls. I had to call the police to help get him out of the building. This was one of thousands of learning experiences.

The biggest lessons I have learned are that first impressions and the passing of quick judgment on a person are wrong, and that if you ask others for help with a meaningful endeavor you will in fact receive that assistance. I want to thank those who have worked here, the Board of Directors and all who have volunteered, and especially the broader community that has demonstrated over and over again that compassion is in fact alive and well. I have been extremely fortunate to have had this career, one that would not have been possible without all the work done by the folks mentioned above.

Respectfully Submitted,
Dennis R. Marble, Executive Director