

Update on the activities of the Burlington Warming Shelter

March 15, 2015 – The fifth week

We have completed our fifth week of operation for the Burlington Warming Shelter. Every bed has been filled every night with the maximum number of guests in overflow. We have had 78 separate guests since we started. Six of our guests have been with us every night since we opened and many more have been very regular attenders. As it gets warmer, we will be turning more people away. Returning guests have a reserved space at the Warming Shelter. The people who have been using hotel rooms are now coming seeking a place to stay. Many are angry because we have no space to put them. Regular guests are also expressing anxiety about the closing of the shelter. Many are being proactive. Some are waiting out their time with us.

CVOEO's insurance carrier provides insurance for the facility, staff and volunteers. We also offered an additional insured to the First United Church in Burlington. They make their showers available 4 days a week for our guests. CVOEO purchased towels and toiletries were donated by various organizations.

Another guest was able to secure work this week bringing the number of our working guests to 11. Four of our guests have graduated to permanent housing.

Mr. Moe Paquette, owner of Papa Franks, will be bringing meals on Mondays from through the end of our service. Mr. David Hartnett, will be bringing meals to the Shelter on Fridays. A husband of one of our volunteers made a wonderful goulash on Saturday. We have had more donuts and fruit and continue to have soup and Peanut Butter and Jelly, Cheese and Crackers. Homemade cookies, fruit and donuts, pizza and wings, homemade soup and sandwiches are such welcome gifts. The Howard Center will be making meals for our guests every Thursday night. Another Howard Center housing unit will be providing meals on several Tuesday nights. St. Mark's Church will be taking over when the Howard Center is done on Tuesdays. That show of concern is priceless.

The University Medical Center Laundry continues to provide us with fresh sheets, blankets and pillows. I can't adequately explain how wonderful it is to see folks sleeping in clean linens.

It has been quiet the last couple of nights. Every night is an adventure and we are grateful for the quiet times.

I could never say enough about our great staff, volunteers and compassionate neighbors. You continue to add strength to this effort.

Thank you for your continued contact and communication.

Jan Demers
jdemers@cvoeo.org