

SPREADING HOLIDAY CHEER



Last year, a group of five college friends hit the post-holiday sales. Cathy Lobe, Betsy Blake, Jan Stripes, Donna Graham and Gloria Irsfeld were looking for more than just a great bargain; they were also planning ahead to help others this holiday season.

These women have varied backgrounds in Home Economics—some still teaching or serving as support staff, some retired. Their training makes them specially qualified to create some home-baked Christmas magic.

After calling us to find out about specific needs among our programs, they gathered the 100 stockings they had purchased on sale last year and custom-filled them with the perfect items to bring cheer to

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Bikes for Homeless Vets: making spirits brighter, two wheels at a time



A bike can be a life-changing gift for a homeless veteran. That's why we need your help to gather 100 bicycles throughout this holiday season and into the New Year.

The bikes are being gathered through Bikes for Homeless Vets—a new program of Volunteers of America of Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho, created by men living in our transitional housing for veterans. It all began after we purchased two mountain bikes for the guys in the two houses to use in July of 2011.

“When we got the bikes, we found that the men in both houses began riding, and riding, and riding,” recalls Jon Carollo, director of housing for veterans. “The bikes replaced the bus for trips to the VA medical center, the grocery store, and to work. As the veterans continued to ride, we experienced less conflict in the house and what appeared to be a decrease in anxiety and depression. Veterans began interacting with each other more. They even started having

weekly house rides together.”

“It was amazing,” says Carollo. “Except that we quickly realized that when a veteran ‘graduated’ and left the

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together, they are just vets
riding with other vets.”**

house for his own apartment, his bike had to stay with the program. I asked the guys at both houses to come up with a solution. They created Bikes for Homeless Vets—a way for guys in our programs to have bikes of their own and a way for them to give other homeless

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We are grateful to the following foundations for their generous support during the past year:

American Association
of University Women

Clarence Colby Memorial Fund

The Empire Health Foundation

Frank & Willi Storey Fund

Henry Treede Designated Fund

The Home Depot Foundation

Inland Northwest
Community Foundation

I.S. & Emily Fetterman Foundation

Roy & Leona Nelson Foundation

Safeco Insurance Foundation

The Schaub Foundation

Tua L V Whitham Annuity Trust

William O. Murphy Foundation

Women Helping Women Fund

Woodrow Foundation

vets this incredible gift of increased independence.”

The program was designed and is administered by veterans—ranging in age from 22 to 73—currently living in the two houses as well as several recent alumni of the program. Each Friday, veterans from Rest & Recoup and Eagles Rest transitional houses, as well as several men who have graduated from the program meet to discuss ways to gather bikes, criteria for distributing the bikes and how they will meet their goal of distributing 100 bikes over the next year.

Donated bikes will be repaired as needed by veterans and then given to formerly and currently homeless veterans who are actively receiving services somewhere in Spokane. The goal of each bike is to assist a veteran in becoming more independent.

“These men all risked their lives for our independence; donating a bike is a great way to return the favor. When you are on a bike, no one knows if you’re homeless, if you have PTSD or struggle with sobriety,” says Jon Carollo, director of Volunteers of America’s veterans programs. “When the guys take their bikes out together, they are just vets riding with other vets.”

How can you help? Donate a new or used bicycle, cycling accessories (helmets, lights, locks, water bottles, etc.), make a monetary donation or volunteer your time. For additional information visit www.voaspokane.org/VeteransDay2011 or contact Mary Tracey at 509.624.2378 ext. 104.



We kicked off our effort to gather 100 used bikes this holiday season with a Veterans Day bike drive on 11-11-11.

If you'd like to make the holidays brighter for a veteran in need by donating your used bike or bicycle accessories call us at 509.624.2378.

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! TO OUR EVENT SUPPORTERS



Former Hope House resident LeeAnn (who is now a college graduate!) visits the make-up chair before hitting the catwalk as one of our celebrity models. Read about her amazing journey out of homelessness at www.voaspokane.org/LeeAnnsStory.

Thanks again to everyone who supported our fall fundraising events—these events gather crucial support and funding for Hope House women’s shelter in Spokane and Project Safe Place in Coeur d’Alene.

The 13th annual Lake City Blues Benefit raised support and dollars for Project Safe Place. We appreciate the hard work of Carl Speer and the Inland Empire Blues Society in making this annual event a reality. Thanks also go to Steve Saunders and everyone at O’Shay’s Irish Pub & Eatery, our many auction donors, and to our great bands—Riverboat Dave & The Furtraders and VooDoo Church.

Supporters of the Hope House Celebrity Fashion Show once again raised vital dollars and awareness for our women’s shelter. We are grateful for the support of our sponsors American West Bank, PAML, the Sisters of Providence, Pamiris, Inland Imaging, Kalispel Tribe & Northern Quest Casino, Red Lion Hotels Corp. and Numerica Credit Union. Thank you to all our celebrity models, fashion providers, stylists and auction donors. Please help us thank our supporters by visiting their websites and businesses. You can find a full list of donors at www.voaspokane.org/FashionShow2011.

And of course we’d like to thank everyone who attended these two events. Your support means the world to us and to the homeless women at Hope House and at-risk youth at Project Safe Place. Neither program could survive without you.

REMEMBER...a little help *goes a long way!*

- \$25 gives a night of shelter to a needy woman at Hope House
- \$50 provides 30 two-hour bus passes
- \$150 pays for a month of electricity at Flaherty House
- \$250 ensures a week of nutritious food for six moms and six babies at Alexandria's House

FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO DOWNLOAD OUR COMPLETE HOLIDAY WISH LIST VISIT WWW.VOASPOKANE.ORG OR CONTACT MARY TRACEY AT 509.624.2378 X 104 OR MTRACEY@VOASPOKANE.ORG.

Your gifts: Spreading holiday cheer (continued from pg.1)

homeless teens at Crosswalk, women at Hope House and men in our two houses for formerly homeless veterans (pictured, lower right). And as if that weren't enough, they also donated \$300 worth of gifts for teen girls at Crosswalk.

Their heroic effort to spread holiday cheer is just one of many. Fortunately, we see miraculous acts of giving every day here at Volunteers of America, especially during this season of giving. To help us all catch the holiday spirit, we thought we would share some of our favorite miracles from this season.

The staff at AmericanWest Bank, for example, adopted Crosswalk as their holiday beneficiary this year. In just one business day, AmericanWest Bank staff purchased and wrapped more than \$1,000 worth of Christmas gifts for the homeless youth at Crosswalk teen shelter—including boots, hoodies, art supplies, headphones and other teen-friendly goodies.

The women of Hope House will be extra cozy this winter, thanks to gifts from The Women's Circle. They recently dropped off coordinated bundles of sheets, towels, socks and gloves for women in need (pictured, upper right). They also included blank Christmas cards and postage stamps to help the women send their loved ones good wishes this holiday season—a thoughtful gift that will help homeless women stay connected or reconnect with those who love them (p.s. if you're looking for a way to help at Hope House, our recent fire wiped out our blanket and towel supply).

In addition to providing gifts and essentials to the men, women and youth in our programs, we are also working once again to provide nearly 20,000 books for low-income children through the Christmas Bureau. We are grateful to all those who have donated books (especially Scholastic who donated 40,000 books this year) or contributed funds toward the purchase of books. And, as always, we thank the women of Alpha Delta Kappa teacher's sorority, led by Tana Carosella (pictured on the cover to the left of VOA president/CEO Marilee Roloff) who help us each year to distribute the books, hand picking the perfect read for each child.

Thanks to all of you who have given your hearts and hands, your time and money, even a bit of your own Christmas to enrich the lives of those who need our help the most. There are the donors who give thousands and those who give all they can—sometimes just a dollar in an envelope. We feel the love that comes to us with each gift.

To learn about needs that have not yet been met, please see our 2011 Holiday Wish List (pg. 4) or call us at 509.624.2378.



Members of The Women's Circle recently dropped off coordinated bundles of sheets, towels, socks and gloves for women in need at Hope House.



The folks at Cascade Windows held a holiday shoe drive for Crosswalk teen shelter. Cascade gathered 85 pairs of new shoes for homeless youth!



**Volunteers
of America®**

**EASTERN WASHINGTON
& NORTHERN IDAHO**

525 W SECOND AVE
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**IT'S NOT TOO
LATE TO HELP!**

2011 HOLIDAY WISH LIST

Looking to spread some holiday cheer? For more information or to arrange drop off or pickup contact Mary Tracey at 509.624.2378 ext. 104.



MEN & WOMEN

*Emergency Services—Hope House
—Permanent Supportive Housing
—Veteran's Housing*

- Pajamas, robes & slippers (XL-XXL)
- Jeans, flannel shirts, sweatshirts & sweaters (esp. LG-XXL)
- Bicycles & helmets
- Men's work boots
- Gloves, stocking hats & coats
- Household items (alarm clocks, dishes, furniture, microwaves, pots/pans, shower curtains, silverware, towels, twin sheets, vacuums, etc.)
- Bus passes
- Gift certificates (clothing, crafts, food, haircuts, movies, etc.)
- Cameras, albums & frames
- Watches & jewelry
- Toiletries (deodorant, feminine hygiene, razors, toothbrushes, etc.) & make-up
- Craft, model-making, sewing & quilting materials
- Backpacks
- Postage stamps & stationary
- Socks & underwear (briefs, bras, thermals)

FAMILIES

Emergency Services

- Bath & kitchen towels
- Cleaning, laundry & kitchen supplies
- Family games & grocery gift cards
- Sweatshirts, sweatpants (esp. M-XXL)
- White tube socks
- Men's white t-shirts (esp. M-XXL)

TEENAGERS

Alexandria's House—Aston-Bleck Apts—Crosswalk—Flaberry House—Independent Living—Project Safe Place

- Underwear & socks
- Jeans, hooded sweatshirts, flannel shirts & tops (esp. XL-XXL)
- Gloves & stocking caps
- Games & activities (basketballs, board games, footballs, hacky sacks, playing cards, skateboards, tech decks, etc.)
- Electronics (hand-held video games, Mp3 players, etc.)
- Toiletries (esp. deodorant & toothbrushes) & make-up
- Arts & craft supplies (beads, scrapbooking, sketchbooks, etc.)
- Boots & winter shoes
- Bicycle helmets, lights & locks
- Twin bedding & bath towels
- Tool kits
- Gift certificates (books, clothes, food, movies, music, etc.)
- Cameras, albums & frames

BABIES & TODDLERS

Alexandria's House—Aston-Bleck Apts—Crosswalk

- Baby Bjorns, backpacks, slings & diaper bags
- Toys (ages 0-4)
- Diapers (all sizes)
- Gift certificates (books, groceries, pictures with Santa, toy store, etc.)
- Strollers & new car seats
- Food grinders
- Baby bottles, dishes & sippy cups
- Bath supplies (bubble bath, shampoo, toys, etc.)
- Cameras, albums, frames & scrapbook supplies

WORKING WONDERS

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Deduction Reminder

To be eligible for a deduction on your 2011 taxes, end-of-year donations must be postmarked by Dec. 31st.

