



IHOC Monthly News

Volume X, Issue III



In 2023 IHOC continued to provide services to homeless men and other individuals and families in need. In addition to providing our usual programs we also moved forward with an ambitious plan to expand our Transitional Housing Program.

After months of negotiations, we entered into an agreement of sale with the owner of a large property in Haddon Heights where we envision providing transitional housing to ten men. We had hoped to be in possession of the property in time to use the house to accommodate graduates of a 2023 - 2024 Hospitality Network. However, negotiations with the owner and the township continued throughout the year. We are now hoping for a closing in 2024 in time for us to restart the Network. On a positive note, discussions with members of the local faith community and local businesses owners were met with enthusiastic offers of support.

The IHOC transitional house in Cherry Hill provided housing and case management to four men. During their stay, our Case Manager, Sonya Jacobs, helped the men apply for services and housing. One of the four men moved in with a family member. There are still three men living in the house.

Our Case Manager continued to reach out by telephone and text to men who participated in one of our programs and we were also able to hold three in-person get-togethers for these men. In April we held a "Spring Thing" get together lunch at St. Michael's Lutheran Church. In August we held a picnic on the grounds of Oaklyn Baptist Church. In December we held a holiday party also at St. Michael's. All three events were well attended by program participants and volunteers.

Former Board member, Tom Martin, also continued to plan and coordinate once a month mentor night get-togethers. These get-togethers included bowling, movies or just dinner and conversation. This year the program also included a special holiday dinner hosted by Cara and Matt Gehring.

After a two-year hiatus, we were able, under the direction of Carol Dann, to have our 17th Annual Mall Walk in person at the Voorhees Town Center. Although everyone who participated had a fun time, we fell short of our fund-raising goal of \$50,00. However, we were able to raise almost \$40,000.

In 2023 we received a grant from the South Jersey Presbytery to update our website and social media. The grant enabled us to hire a part-time Communications Coordinator who is hard at work on this project. The job of updating our social media has proven to be more of a challenge than expected due to the number of people who were involved in the past. We are looking forward to the launch of a new and improved website in 2024.

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(Continued) IHOC was able to continue our Adopt- A- Box and Pack- A- Sack Programs. In March, our Adopt- A -Box team, under the direction of Rhoda Wus, was able to collect and distribute 450 complete boxes and bags of personal care items, shelters as well as numerous sample sized and extra items to programs helping homeless individuals. In August, under the direction of Alex DeFlavis, we collected and distributed over 600 back backs filled with school supplies to shelters and programs serving underprivileged children.

In October we again returned to the Catholic Church of St. Mary for a festive annual dinner. We enjoyed great food and entertainment. Although the focus of this event continued to be fellowship rather than fund raising, we still managed to raise \$ 1,600 for IHOC's programs.

As I review the past year, I am encouraged by the many ways our volunteers continue to help us provide assistance to people in need. In 2024, I am looking forward to continuing these programs and to the opening of a new transitional house.

Executive Director
Ruth Morgenroth

2024 Adopt a Box



Adopt a Box personal care products for those in need was more than successful! Each year we plan to at least be able to provide **some** much needed care items for the shelters... and each year we are overwhelmed with the generosity provided by so many donations from congregations, businesses and individuals. Over 650+ prepared boxes and bags along with additional donations were given to shelters and those in need.

Our committee works tirelessly to organize, pack and distribute all the donations to the shelters for pick-up or delivery. As you can see from the above photos, this project is driven by dedication, care and love to help others. Thank you for all your support and donations, thank you St. Bartholomew's Episcopal Church for hosting once again and Thank you to a great team of dedicated volunteers!

Rhoda A. Wus