



# Warming Works

Sheltering the poorest among us—all are welcome.

**MISSION:** Fox Valley Warming Shelter, Inc. seeks to provide overnight, temporary shelter to homeless adult men and women, and to address other needs by collaborating with community resources.

Email: [warmingshelter@gmail.com](mailto:warmingshelter@gmail.com)  
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(920) 832-1479  
Winter 2011, Vol 3, Issue 4

[www.foxvalleywarmingshelter.org](http://www.foxvalleywarmingshelter.org)  
1928 W College Ave, Appleton, WI 54914

**OPERATING HOURS**  
5:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.  
Sunday hours may vary.

**PHONE NUMBERS**  
Office: 920.832.1479

**Executive Director**  
**Brad Vivoda**  
920.277.1968

**Operations Manager**  
**Dawn Kasten**  
920.707.3897

**Volunteer Coordinator**  
**Connie Raether**  
920.419.0928

One Day—see p. 4

Gold Leaf 7 days \$4200  
Silver Leaf 3 days \$1800  
Brass Leaf 1 day \$600

### Advent/Hanukah/ Christmas/Kwanzaa/ Holiday Suggestions

1. Invite shelter staff or a board member to speak to your group on homelessness.
2. Call 419-0928 to volunteer at FVWS.
3. Make a year-end donation to Fox Valley Warming Shelter.

## Volunteer of the year says it doesn't make sense, but it is the right thing to do

Approximately 100 people attended FVWS's Annual Meeting Oct. 25. In his speech, Volunteer of the Year Gary Crevier said it really doesn't make sense to spend our own money to cook and serve others or to wash their clothes in the middle of the night—but it's the right thing to do. For those who missed the meeting, here's what Gary had to say:

I'm just one of so many tremendous volunteers. Without the kindness and generosity of each of you, the FVWS wouldn't be possible. We have calculated that around 3,000 individuals have volunteered either their time or talent or made a contribution to the FVWS.

**VALUES ARE CAUGHT:** Thinking about that



Gary Crevier shares thoughts on volunteering.

incredible figure, I wondered what moves people to volunteer. Why do people spend countless hours for something or someone other than themselves? Somehow they *caught* that value. Perhaps you've heard the expression "*Values are caught, not taught*".

This does make sense. Why I volunteer probably began many years ago when I was a cub scout, with my mother as den mother and my dad helping when all of us scouts went camping. My parents were always giving of their time at church and instilling in me and my siblings the value of being aware of and working with and for others.

Besides raising me and my siblings, they also took in 29 foster children over the years. I guess I caught some of that value of

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## Cronmiller says it's about building community

Debra Cronmiller spoke about the imperfect nature of dealing with homelessness and poverty. Following are some of her remarks.

In spite of all the resources available in the Fox Valley, there are still too many individuals who cannot or do not take advantage of these services. In addition, there are still those who don't think there are any poor, hungry, or homeless people in the valley. Even though Appleton is rated 8<sup>th</sup> in volunteering, many do *not* volunteer.

Actually, the valley is somewhat isolated from true poverty. In the U.S. 37 million people go hungry every day; 48 million have no health

insurance. Probably close to 500,000 are homeless every night. Too many still don't see any way out of the violence in their lives.

Here in the Fox Cities, over 300 per day are living

homeless. As Gary said, community is measured by how well we treat the least among us.



Debra Cronmiller

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**FOX VALLEY  
WARMING  
SHELTER INC.  
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**Warming Works** is  
published by Fox  
Valley Warming  
Shelter, Inc.

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**MISSION**

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(continued from p 1—Debra Cronmiller)

## Community measured by how well least are treated

Unfortunately we didn't treat *all* of our least. FVWS reached into the community to help the least. Don Stoegbauer told me and everyone else that we had a gap and needed to address that gap. There was a sense of wanting to collaborate with the Housing Coalition (which is recognized around the state as one of the best).

The dedication of the board members has brought the organization to where it is – a critical part of the community. Their collaboration with the Housing Coalition and the community is a sign of their leadership. It's all about building a strong community.

(continued from p 1—Gary Crevier)

## Volunteers are beacons, true silent leaders

getting out of myself at an early age...not perfectly of course, but at least it pointed me in a direction for the rest of my life.

**COMPASSION:** I think volunteering for the sake of the homeless is a response to our basic need to have compassion for others. We provide warmth during the cold months, but also the warmth of feeling like they belong, that they are not marginalized, forgotten or looked down upon. They need to feel included, a part of society.

**CONNECTEDNESS:** I believe another reason why people volunteer, as so many of you have, is because we believe in a connectedness with all people. And this comes from a very deep spiritual value that cannot remain hidden. Whenever someone else is hurting, we also feel that hurt in a very unique way. Whenever someone else is less of a human being because he or she is living in poverty or hunger, then we become less human, and our own dignity is lessened along with theirs. A community cannot be a true community without addressing the needs of all the people. Someone once made the observation that the test of a community is how it takes care of the poor and most vulnerable.

**RIGHT THING TO DO:** I think we also volunteer because deep within us we sense it is the right thing to do. We sense it even though it doesn't make "common sense". Why should we volunteer to spend money to prepare food for an evening meal for any shelter? Shouldn't we save our money during these difficult times? It doesn't make common sense to get up in the middle of the night to work one of the shifts at the warming shelter.

It doesn't make sense to do the laundry for the

homeless in the middle of the night. For those of us who profess a Christian faith, I would suggest that doing laundry for the homeless is the modern day version of washing people's feet as seen in the Bible. Volunteering doesn't make sense at all. But then again, the true spirit of volunteering comes from an entirely other dimension of life that looks to the common good of all people and wanting to be a part of that.

Building the Fox Valley Warming Shelter didn't make any sense, now did it? In spite of having no funds to begin with, you and so many others stepped forward and did

it anyway. In spite of the many reasons you could have found not to volunteer, you did it anyway. And are we ever grateful that you did. I know some of you have received thanks and gratitude from the clients themselves. The valley was recently ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in the state when it comes to volunteering. I am not surprised.

The Warming Shelter is just one of many non-profit organizations working for the good of some of the marginalized people around us. Once we begin to address the

needs of the homeless, a marvelous phenomenon begins to happen. The news begins to flow through the community like wildfire, with others stepping forward to do the same. This was especially true when we rotated from church to church with our homeless, homeless shelter.

All of you are beacons of light shining the way for others to see what it means to live in a caring community. You are some of our community's true silent leaders. Thank you for being part of your Fox Valley Warming Shelter.

During the past season (Oct 2010 through Sept 2011) FVWS served 507 homeless individuals, for 11,855 shelter nights, including 89 women and 54 veterans.

"...doing laundry for the homeless is the modern day version of washing people's feet..."

Gary Crevier

## Drug dealer turns life around—dedicates 10% of book profits to warming shelter

A client speaks about how the Warming Shelter has helped him.

My name is Michael Beyer, but on the streets they called me Jimmy James. I want to tell you all how you have touched my life, but first I want to tell you how I got here.

On a destructive path by the age of 14, I joined a vicious gang for a sense of power and security. I never graduated from high school, but I did graduate into the drug game with ease, making my living off of other people's drug habits. I quickly moved up in the ranks of the gang and was introduced to cocaine and the devil's drug, crack cocaine. When a friend, whom I had given a line of cocaine one night, died 16 hours later, I was arrested and charged with homicide, the first case in the state of Wisconsin where cocaine was classified as a dangerous weapon.

While incarcerated, I found God and promised that I would never return to my old way of life, no matter how bad it got for me. I walked away from the drug and gang life that I had lived for 28 years. My parole agent told me that if she had a nickel for every time she heard the story of someone finding God and going straight, she wouldn't have to work another day in her life.

The only place I could rent was a ghetto apartment that was being condemned for bugs. I

had no furniture and slept on the floor. I started to write my first book, A LINE 2 DIE 4, which details how my life changed when I was charged with homicide.

Somehow, even with my record, I was able to get a great job and worked there for just over two years. When the new Human Resources person did a background check on everyone, guess what?.....no more job. Shortly afterwards, I became homeless. I started living in my car and showering at truck stops. I submitted over 300 applications, with no luck. I even started to look out of state for employment. I was able to get job interviews, but kept being denied. During my spare time, I wrote THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK and [SNITCHS] AND BITCHES, which illustrate what gang life is really all about.

A Fond du Lac shelter indicated that I had to be a resident. A shelter in Oshkosh fed me, but then told me to leave. Not believing what I had just heard, I continued driving down the highway in shock. I called a shelter in Appleton and was again denied due to my record.

I was exhausted—physically and emotionally. The car fuel light was on, and I was ready to quit. I started to think back to how my life used to be when I was in the gang. I had money and power. I wrestled with the thought of just going back to the streets where I knew I could make it, but the promise I made to God echoed in my head. I couldn't go back. I didn't want to go back!

I took a deep breath and called the Fox Valley Warming Shelter. They said I could come in, but I figured it would be just like the other shelters.

I was totally relieved when I got there and was accepted into the shelter. They treated me with respect and dignity, and I felt like a human being for the first time in a long time.

I was certain that nobody was going to hire a felon, but the warming shelter staff helped me set some goals for myself and encouraged me to keep going. In a very short time I was able to find employment and am working 50 hours a week at \$7.25/hr. I also wrote my fourth book, THE MELTING POT, and have declared that I will donate 10% of the profits from all of my books to the Fox Valley Warming Shelter.

**Editor's note:** Jimmy James' four books: A LINE 2 DIE 4, THE NEW KID ON THE BLOCK, [SNITCHS] AND BITCHES, and THE MELTING POT, are for sale online at [www.Xlibris.com](http://www.Xlibris.com) and at [www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com).



Michael Beyer aka Jimmy James

NOTE: Michael is looking for editorial help for a second edition of his books. If interested, call 920-225-9653.

In partnership with

St. Vincent de Paul



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Fighting Hunger. Sustaining Hope.

Collaborating with

Fox Cities Housing Coalition Continuum of Care System

Supported by numerous foundations; civic, corporate, and religious organizations; and individuals

## Shelter financially sound but needs to be sustained

Board President Bill Guilbeault announced that FVWS is financially sound.

However, sustained operations depend entirely on the generosity of contributors and grantors.

Checks may be made out and mailed to:

**FVWS**  
**PO Box 1261**  
**Appleton, WI 54912**



Bill Guilbeault

Donations may be made online at [www.foxvalleywarmingshelter.org](http://www.foxvalleywarmingshelter.org)

For information on stock donations, please call Brad Vivoda at 277-1968

## FVWS implements new policy—Individual Support Planning

It is FVWS policy to accept all homeless adults unless they are disruptive or considered by staff to be a danger to themselves or others at that time.

Staff do check with law enforcement in case there may be an active warrant for someone's arrest. We cooperate with law enforcement, safety, health and other officials.



Executive Director  
 Brad Vivoda

It has always been FVWS policy to encourage clients to use other community resources to move toward more stability and self-sufficiency as soon as possible.

In the past, the goal was to empower clients to move on to a more stable living situation within three months, but they were not forced to leave.

Recently, the Board of Directors approved a new policy, called **Individual Support Planning (ISP)**. The goal is to help each individual make a transition from homelessness toward a more stable housing situation and self-sufficiency within 30 days.

Extensions beyond 30 days are granted if certain criteria are met and progress is made toward their individual goals. This is a more formal and detailed approach which helps clients determine their own

goals and obstacles and how they can overcome those obstacles.

We also ask them to meet certain criteria, if applicable, such as applying for appropriate federal, state, and local programs, making all court dates, medical appointments, and scheduled meetings; and saving a percent of their income, if they work.

These guidelines are individualized, based on the needs of each person. The main goal is not to boot the homeless out the door ASAP, but to motivate them to set some goals, make some plans, and start working toward independence and self-

sufficiency. The shelter functions to assist the homeless in time of crisis and to help them return to independence. Staff helps connect them to other community resources and supportive services to accomplish their goals.



Operations Manager  
 Dawn Kasten

Fox Valley Warming Shelter is not a holding tank for people who make no effort to deal with their homeless issues. In order to avoid duplicating services, we do not offer daytime programming and are not responsible for clients during the day. We make every effort to connect clients with the services already existing in the community.

### Volunteer orientations 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Wed

Volunteer orientations for prospective volunteers and those already volunteering who would like to learn more about the shelter and/or about other opportunities will be held the first and third Wednesdays of each month starting Nov. 2nd.

Orientations at the shelter will be from 1:30 to 3:00 p.m. Registration is required. Please call Connie at 419-0928 or email [vcfws@gmail.com](mailto:vcfws@gmail.com).

### One Day at a Time paid for 50 days

Last season (Oct 2010 through Sept 2011) \$600 covered most of the cost of shelter operations for one day, or about \$25/person. This includes some food, toiletries, staff salaries, utilities, security, insurance, van operations, laundry supplies, bus passes, etc., etc.

*One Day* donations have paid for most of 50 days. Supporting *boulders* representing \$5,000+ donations/grants form the foundation underneath the tree. **THANK YOU** to all who support this program. If you would like to see this *Tree*, call Brad Vivoda: 277-1968.