



# Building Bridges

Ending and preventing homelessness in our community . . . one church and one family at a time.

814-237-HOPE    www.bohcc.org    bohcc@verizon.net    ~ Winter 2009 ~    1315 S. Allen St. - PO Box 433 State College PA 16804

## *A Message from the Board of Directors*

by Kathleen Stehouwer, board co-chair

Recently, have you found yourself turning off the radio, laying down a magazine or switching channels on the TV to avoid hearing news of the global economic crisis? So many negative indicators, so many dreary numbers, so many weary faces make it hard to think about what this all adds up to.

For a moment, I would like us to focus on this simple equation: One homeless woman and her children + one volunteer mentoring group + one case manager (backed by your financial support and a volunteer board) = the opportunity to end or prevent homelessness and provide a safe and secure future for that family. We can each make a contribution to this scenario, whether it is a gift of prayer, time, financial or other resources.

Bridge of Hope Centre County is currently receiving referrals in preparation for making our first match between a family and a mentoring group. We have all been working toward this goal, and we ask for your continued prayers and support as we enter this exciting time.

So remember, **One in-need family + One caring group of individuals = Making a difference in the lives of a family here in Centre County.** That adds up to something we can all feel good about. Thank you for being part of the equation!

## NEWS & NOTES

- Many thanks to all the generous donors who gave to BoHCC in response to our Annual Appeal Letter last fall. We reached our goal!
- The Bridge of Hope website, [www.bohcc.org](http://www.bohcc.org), is now fully operational – get information, make contributions and become involved!
- THANK YOU to Nittany Office Equipment for their generous donations of office supplies and equipment for the new BoHCC office.
- BoHCC introduces new members of the Board of Directors:  
Terri Breindel – co-founder of The Goddard School & Comfort Keepers.  
Caroline Fye – former fiscal coordinator at Women's Resource Center.  
Joanne Steindorf - former staff person at Centre Volunteers in Medicine.  
Sharon Stringer – associate professor of communication media at Lock Haven University of Pennsylvania.
- With BoHCC's new fiscal year, beginning April 1, there is opportunity for participation on the Board of Directors in the areas of Development and Program. Visit the website to learn more about the Bridge of Hope mission or to contact us about your interest.

## Strangers Opened Up Their Hearts for Me

*Before I came to Bridge of Hope, I was in a hopeless situation. I had become involved with drugs, lost my job, my car, and my family's trust – all in a matter of six months. And things got worse when my boyfriend walked away, leaving me five months pregnant.*

*I had no job, no money, no transportation, no place to live, and no family or friends to turn to. I was devastated. I cannot explain in words how hurt and overcome with fear I was.*

*It was at that point that I cried out to God. And it was then that I heard about Bridge of Hope from a woman that would later become one of my mentors.*

*Throughout my time in the program, I had many struggles; but one thing is for sure – without Bridge of Hope and God's help, I would not be where I am today.*

*Shortly after my baby was born I took computer training courses. With financial help from Bridge of Hope I found an apartment for me and my daughter. I found an automobile and was offered a temporary job.*

*Now, a year later, I am at the same job permanently. Now I pay my rent and my other bills each month on my own. The mentors I have come to know stayed with me and were there as support in times when I needed them.*

*For all the things they've done, and for sticking with me, I will be forever grateful to them.*

*I definitely feel that Bridge of Hope is a wonderful program. There are still lots of issues in my life, but the time in Bridge of Hope has definitely helped me to take a very large step in the right direction. They not only offered me financial help, they also offered personal counseling and encouragement, which I needed.*

*The experience of going through this program and having so many people who were complete strangers open up their hearts to help me is something I will always be thankful for and will share with my daughter in the future!*

(This woman and her daughter were served by Bridge of Hope Lancaster & Chester Counties, and Quarryville Community Church.)

## First Mentoring Group is Formed!

Bridge of Hope Centre County (BoHCC) is excited to hold our first Mentor Group trainings on February 27 and March 2, 2009! Our first mentoring group is from University Mennonite Church and will be matched with our first program participant to provide practical, spiritual, and emotional support to the mother and her children while she obtains job training or education. This means that (drum roll, please) BoHCC is also now accepting referrals!

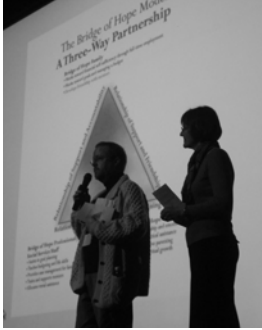
An appropriate referral is a single mother who is either currently homeless or in danger of becoming homeless. According to The National Alliance to End Homelessness, The Department of Housing and Urban Development, and The Coalition on Homelessness in Pennsylvania, homelessness is a condition in which families have no regular, adequate residence in which they can live safely and legally 24 hours a day and meet their basic needs with privacy and dignity. Homelessness ends when the family is living in permanent, affordable housing and has adequate support systems in place with which to remain stable. The woman must be willing to commit to a 12-18 month program of job training and/or education, to participate in strengths-based case management services, and be willing to include a group of 8-12 new friends (the mentor group) in her life.

We are actively recruiting additional mentoring groups from local churches. Mentors attend two 2-hour trainings, then commit to weekly phone contact and spending time with their Bridge of Hope family at least once every four to six weeks. In addition, mentors attend once-a-month Bridge of Hope Nights for on-going training and support. Mentoring is a ministry of friendship; it is a gift you can give for free!

If you would like to learn more about Bridge of Hope mentoring groups, or if you would like to make a referral, please contact Kris at 814-237-HOPE (4673) or [bohcc@verizon.net](mailto:bohcc@verizon.net).



Above: *movie patrons choose snacks and pick up Bridge of Hope information in the theater lobby.*



Left: *Board co-chairs introduce the Bridge of Hope three-way partnership model.*

**~OUT OF THE COLD~**

As the snow flurried outside, young and old gathered at noon on Valentine's Day for the 2nd annual Out of the Cold family matinee, *Akeelah and the Bee*, at The State Theatre. Our thanks to the theater staff, our sponsors, and the movie patrons who made this year's event a success. Save the date for next year's movie, Saturday, February 13, 2010. Send ideas for next year's family movie to Anne Marshall at [annedmarshall@aol.com](mailto:annedmarshall@aol.com).

**THANK YOU!**

**We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of the following sponsors:**

- Platinum – Sam's Club
- Gold – Dr. John Robison; Dr. & Mrs. Ray Vautour
- Silver – Beth Richards Kalenak of Kissinger, Bigatel & Brower REALTORS; *KBB Cares* of Kissinger, Bigatel & Brower REALTORS; M&T Bank; McQuaide, Blasko, Fleming & Faulkner, Inc.; Reese Engineering
- Bronze – Automated Records Centre; Bergenblick Beef; Tom Cali, Re/Max Centre Realty; Frost & Conn, Inc; The Goddard School; Goodall & Yurchak, P.C.; Shirley Hsi, Re/Max Centre Realty; Jersey Shore State Bank; Keystone Real Estate Group; Kathryn Miller, Central Federal Mortgage; Supelco
- Friend – Campbell & Pine Orthodontics; John and Margaret DeMaria; Drs. Doerfler, Ray, Schuchert & Assoc.; Celeste A. Parker, PhD; JoAnn Lew, Re/Max Centre Realty; Lassie MacDonald, Re/Max Centre Realty
- Valentine – Karen Muchmore, Re/Max Centre Realty; Akemi Benton, Re/Max Centre Realty; Giant Market; Wal-Mart; Weis Market

*(We have made every effort to create an accurate sponsor list, and apologize for any errors or omissions.)*

**Chili Cook Off for Charity**

Hosts Dru Anne Schreyer and Rodney Frazier enjoy cups of chili with Kristine Eng and Rosita & Tim Derstine. Bridge of Hope Centre County received \$150 from this benefit supper. Thank You!



**Community Service Events Benefit Bridge of Hope Centre County**

Bridge of Hope Centre County welcomes the opportunity to coordinate with you or your group in holding a benefit fund raising event, be it a lemonade stand or a black-tie gala. Your theme should appropriately represent the Bridge of Hope mission. BoHCC can provide materials, literature and assistance for your event. To schedule an event please contact BoHCC at 237-4673 or [bohcc@verizon.net](mailto:bohcc@verizon.net). Please allow 30-60 days advance notice for event approval. We look forward to hearing from you!



**Neighborhood Yard Sale**

Several families and college students from the Pugh St. area cooperated in a plant/organic produce/yard sale which raised over \$225 in support of Bridge of Hope Centre County. Thank You!

**Bridge of Hope Centre County Board of Directors:**

- Todd Costello: co-chair
- Kathleen Stehouwer: co-chair
- Mary Kathryn Miller: treasurer

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| Karl Bartsch        | Rosita Derstine   |
| Karen Brandes       | Pam Fuller        |
| Jean Riddle Collins | Anne Marshall     |
| Marjorie Costello   | Carla Roser-Jones |

**Program administrator-case manager:** Kris Santillo

*Bridge of Hope Centre County is registered as a 501(c)3 non-profit organization in the state of Pennsylvania. As required by the PA Solicitation of Funds Act, a copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the PA Dept. of State by calling 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.*

**Our Mission Statement:**

Bridge of Hope ends and prevents homelessness for women and children with the help of trained, mentoring groups from within congregations. Our goal is to exemplify Christ's love and to promote physical, emotional, social and spiritual wholeness. Single mothers attain:

- permanent housing
- financial self-sufficiency through employment
- life-changing friendships
- growth and wholeness

*The bridge offers a foundation of professional support as churches engage in a journey toward wholeness with homeless, single mothers and children. The circle represents mentoring friendships that surround and encourage families to develop their God-given strengths.*

*Christ's light brings hope. Out of darkness*

Return Service Requested

About the logo:

