Serenity Home Successes and Future Home Progress

Hard to believe it has been one year since the question of whether or not Serenity Home would be able to stay in its current location was up for a decision. The good news was the Polk County Board voted to keep Serenity Home in the old Polk County Jail building for the next 3 years but, as many of you know, the end of the those three years is fast approaching. That being said, we have spent the past year working on the Serenity Home Relocation plan.

Polk County still has homeless and the need to relocate is definitely a concern that needs to be addressed. Over the past year, we have formed a committee to help find a new home for Serenity Home. The committee has met a few times and a plan is being formed as to what our new building needs and doesn’t need in order to serve our changing face of the homeless in Polk County.

10 years ago when Serenity Home first opened, the face of the homeless person was quite different than it is today. “We are seeing more people come through our doors who are aging, struggling with dementia and have higher barriers than in the past.” says Director Duana Bremer. Bremer also said, “This level of need requires much more focused and long term case management than ever before. Wherever we move, the facility needs to be able to effectively meet these changing needs.”

When Serenity Home first opened the reasons people were finding themselves homeless were often: poor choices, addiction, mental health, physical illness or some other reason. Today we are seeing an increase in the homeless elderly population. Often family support is not there, Social Security checks are not enough to live on and dementia or other mental health issue is consuming their lives. We have had individuals with dementia come into shelter after living in their cars. They have not seen a doctor in a while and their medications may not be right for their physical and mental health. Often times, diabetes meds are not gotten because of medical costs and when the medications for chronic illness are not taken properly well… as you can imagine, their condition deteriorates.

That all being said, we find ourselves re-thinking the structure of our shelter. Asking ourselves, “How can we best serve this new population that we were unprepared for but yet ready to help?” What type of facility? What type of program for the homeless should we offer to Polk County? What partnerships can be formed?

Rest assured, all these questions are being asked and answered. Our main goal at Serenity Home is to serve the homeless population in Polk County to the best of our ability. We are committed to staying the course and to ensuring that our donations are used in an efficient way that cares for those in the most need, in the most effective way. We have learned a lot this past year and while we don’t have a plan in place just yet, we are getting close. As soon as we do...we will of course let you know! You are how we keep serving. Without our donors and volunteers, Serenity Home wouldn’t be here. Thank you so much for your support over the past 10 years. Now… to see what God has in store for the future of our shelter and our new home!
Serenity Home: Give Big and Touch a Truck Most Successful!

April 24th, Serenity Home Shelter once again participated in the annual day of giving here in Polk County, GIVE BIG St. Croix Valley. This year proved to be our best year yet raising nearly $5,000 for Serenity Home Shelter! We are so thankful for the support of the community. We are overwhelmed by your generosity!

As a part of the annual day of giving, Serenity Home has been lucky enough to be supported by Lake Services Unlimited. Each year they have brought out their trucks and they give us $1 for every person that touches the trucks! We have a brat stand and people come out to see us. It is a great event and a whole lot of fun!

Thank you Lake Services, Thank you Volunteers and Thank you DONORS!!!! We can not serve this great community without your support. You all come together to Do the Most Good in Polk County and we are honored to be here serving because of you! Enjoy the pictures in this newsletter. So much fun, we just had to share!

Polk County Salvation Army hosting Summer Kettle Campaign

That’s right... It’s Back! The Summer Red Kettle Campaign has been on hiatus the last few years but due to an increase in demand for services, we are bringing it back. It has been determined that a smaller Summer Kettle Campaign might just be the answer to prayers. Right now we are looking for volunteers who are willing to ring Thursday, Fridays and Saturday’s June 28th through July 28th. Ringers can ring 2 hour shifts or more. We count on our local churches, bible studies, civic groups, homemaker groups and more to fill whole days for us and we are hoping your group would consider doing so.

Sign up is available now and you can be rest assured that time spent ringing goes toward helping people who are homeless and hungry in Polk County. Dollars raised local stay local with 90% staying right here!

Please sign up online today to ring at: Dicks’ Market in Amery, Wayne’s Foods in Luck or Marketplace in St. Croix Falls. Our website is: www.saserenityhome.org or you can always call us too at 715-485-1221. Thanks again to all of our volunteers who take time to ring. We simply would not be able to serve without you!

Serenity Home: Give Big and Touch a Truck Most Successful!
Serenity Home Supplies Needed

13 gallon garbage bags  
Copy Paper  
Tape (masking and scotch)  
Kleenex  
Office Supplies  
(pens, pencils, paper clips, tape etc.)  
Paper Towels  
Toilet Paper  
NEW Pillows  
Dish Soap  
Lysol (spray and liquid cleaner)

Shampoo & Conditioner  
Razors  
Deodorant  
NEW Socks and Underwear  
(All ages, all sizes)  
Towels (Kitchen and Bath)  
Toothpaste, Toothbrushes  
Electric Fans  
Over the Counter Meds  
(Adult, Tylenol, Advil, Chapstick, etc.)  
Cleaning Supplies

More Touch a Truck Fun!

Thank you Volunteers and Thank you Lake Services for your time and for tripling your donation this year! 100 truck visitors but you blessed us with $300! We appreciate you!

If you would like to mail in a financial donation that stays local:

Serenity Home  
200 Polk County Plaza  
Balsam Lake, WI 54810
BackPack Fundraiser in Full Swing; your help is needed!

Did you know that there are hundreds of families living in our community today that are struggling to provide food to their children? This basic necessity is a struggle in many of our neighbor’s homes. The Salvation Army has implemented a program that helps families who struggle by providing a back pack full of food for over the weekends when their child is not benefiting from a free or reduced lunch at school. In the 2017-2018 school year, The Salvation Army Back Pack program supported over 550 families each and every week (350 in Polk County) by providing a back pack full of food on the weekends to families who requested the service. Only families who already met the qualification of free or reduced lunch qualify to participate. Currently the school districts participating in our program show that anywhere from 36% to 77% of the population meet the income limit to qualify for free and reduced lunch. Reports from local teachers, staff and others have shown that since the back pack program has been implemented, less children are showing up to school Monday morning with a hunger belly ache.

Each back pack roughly costs around $7 to fill although some of that cost has been offset in recent years with food donations from local churches and organizations, a need to raise substantial dollars each and every year is there. We are hoping that you will help meet this need by donating, volunteering or sponsoring our upcoming event on June 8th. If you are able to help by donating a Silent Auction item to this event you can either contact Angela at 715-497-4438 or drop it off at The Cut Above in Amery during business hours. You can also call Angela if you are able to sponsor, donate or volunteer at these events.

It takes many people all working together to make this the backpack program successful. We are so thankful for the many churches, organizations and volunteers who ensure the packs get to the kids each week. Please consider supporting the efforts by supporting this upcoming fundraiser to help Polk County kids!

Stop in and see our memorabilia!

We are proud of our organization, The Salvation Army, and it’s rich history. A few of our Serenity Home staff have started collecting some great items to display at the shelter showing some of the cool things The Salvation Army has done over the years. We just love hearing stories about how The Salvation Army impacted Grandma’s and Grandpa’s, Mom’s and Dad’s and friends and neighbors through the generations. After all, we have been around for over 150 years! If you have a story to share or just want to see our cool items, stop by Serenity Home in Balsam Lake. We would love to show you how we are serving Polk County and talk about the ways The Salvation Army has impacted many over the years!
Silent Messengers well attended, THANK YOU!

Palm Sunday this year, The Silent Messengers performed once again as a benefit to Serenity Home and Grace Place Shelter. This group performs during the Easter and Christmas seasons around the area and does a fantastic job. The youth who comprise the cast of the show celebrate and re-enact the life of Christ from birth to Resurrection. The really unique part of this is that the entire show is done without speaking. The show is performed through music, lights and beautiful movement.

If you have never had a chance to see this crew of teens, you should plan to attend one of their performances. In March, we were lucky to be included in their line up and we were able to raise some money to help those in need in St. Croix and Polk County. A special thank you goes to The Silent Messengers for doing the performance for free as a donation to the shelters. We are simply amazed by your talent and your dedication to spreading the Gospel while Doing the Most Good to help those in the Most Need. This year’s performance was held at Faith Community Church in New Richmond. A big Thank you also goes out to them for their wonderful hospitality and the crew of volunteers who helped set up, clean up and so much more! What a great place and we were grateful for their willingness to host us. If you didn’t get to see this amazing group of performers...don’t, worry! We are hoping to host them next year.

Did you Know? The Polk County Salvation Army has a Facebook Page? Like us on Facebook at Polk County Salvation Army to learn all about the fun events we participate in, volunteer opportunities, and how our organization is working to Do the Most Good!

Amery Empty Bowls Event: Success!

We are so thankful for the many hands that worked to make the Amery Empty Bowls event so successful. The event raised $8,000 to help fight childhood hunger! The Amery Empty Bowls Committee, Artist Paul Oman, Volunteers and Donors...THANK YOU! Your talents and dedication are being used to serve those in need! We are overwhelmed!
Did you know you can get your newsletter in your inbox rather than your mail box? If you would rather receive the electronic version, please just email your email address to: Angela_Moulton@usc.salvationarmy.org along with your name and postal address and we will update our records to include YOU for the electronic newsletter!

Thank you!

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about how you can volunteer or donate to help in your community.

Salvation Army - Polk County
200 Polk Plaza
Balsam Lake, WI 54810
(715) 485-1221

The Mission Statement of the Salvation Army USA

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the Universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.