

# Our Neighbors' Place, Inc. - The Year 2011 in Review



This is a report of the viability of Our Neighbors' Place (ONP) and the dedication of families and individuals of Pierce and St. Croix Counties, who believe in helping one's neighbor. Our mission is to provide shelter and supportive services to families and individuals of Pierce and St. Croix Counties and to help people in need move toward independence and self-sufficiency. This report shows the dedication of many people who make this organization function.

## **Emergency Shelter**

- A. 215 West Cedar Street in River Falls was purchased on January 31, 2011 with funds from-  
\$120,000 Capital Campaign Fundraising  
\$120,000 Interest free loan for three years from the City of River Falls  
As of 12/1/2011 - \$40,000 has been paid off on the loan.
- B. Renters remained on site until June and July when their leases expired. A refurbishing project began and ran from June 1<sup>st</sup> through October 6<sup>th</sup>. The total cost to refurbish was \$20,705.78, which would have been much higher if not for the generosity of local businesses, organizations and individuals donating goods and services. The carpet was removed and laminate flooring was laid. Three garages were converted into two additional bedrooms. All woodwork was sanded and varnished. All new light fixtures and bathrooms were updated, and all walls and ceilings were painted. Energy efficient appliances replaced old ones. Additional insulation was added, concrete sidewalks laid and landscaping started. Hot nights, sweaty days and many hours here and there resulted in four completed, furnished and nicely decorated apartments, including linens and dishes.  
*The Volunteer Hours put into the refurbishing project came to approximately 4,800.*
- C. A measurement of use of the Shelter is called Shelter Nights.  
Each person is counted each night they stay during the month. January-August 2011 ONP rented four apartments in River Falls, those shelter night stays are included in the total for 2011. We were down in numbers over late August and early September due to transitioning out of the rental and prior to being able to move families into the refurbished apartments. We did cover expenses at a local motel for some during that time. The total Shelter Nights in 2011 was 2,973 and that averages out to 270 shelter nights per month. When a family is in Shelter they live free, giving them the chance to get back on their feet, find a job and then move within three months to their own place.  
*The Shelter Support Team provides in home support and resources and volunteered over 1,224 hours.*
- D. The Transportation Team was available for families that needed rides to job interviews, medical appointments, to get to work or other locations as deemed necessary.  
*The Transportation Team volunteered over 300 hours of time.*

## **Our Neighbors' Place Day Center**

- A. The center is open Monday through Friday 9am to 5pm.  
It is staffed by trained individuals called Guest Coordinators.  
Their job is to provide resources to help with a variety of crisis needs.
- B. The Day Center averages 16 families and 7 individual intakes each month.  
*A total of 284 encounters per month.*  
These encounters do not reflect the number of visitors who come to bring donations, offer support, call to find out what we need or just stop in to see what ONP is all about. An example of an encounter is a return guest, a visitor to WestCAP, someone who came to shop in The Closet, or use the computers, phone or wash their clothes.
- C. This year a new training program has been started for Guest Coordinators and the Day Center Volunteer annual has been completed.  
*Over 2,040 volunteer hours volunteered at the Day Center.*

## **The Closet**

Provides quality clothing to the general public for purchase and free to those in need. The Closet is maintained by a small staff of volunteers who sort, wash, mend, change out the seasons, decorate and assist shoppers. Relying on the public's donations of clothing which are then sold at low prices, staff is then able to purchase items needed that we do not receive as donations such as new underwear, socks, certain sizes of select clothing, boots, and shoes.

*The Closet had over 780 hours volunteered.*

## **The Kinnickinnic Backpack Program**

Since its inception in May of 2010 it has developed a deep relationship with the River Falls Homeless School Liaisons as well as the counselors. Without their support the program would not work. At this time there are 35 backpacks going to the grade schools, middle school and Montessori. The average cost per back pack per week is \$7.10 and the total weight of food per week is 839 pounds.

*The Backpack Program requires an average of 60 hours per week.*

## **The Board of Directors**

Our Neighbors' Place became a tax-exempt, non-profit corporation, gaining 501c(3) approval in June 2011. At that time we left the St. Croix Valley Foundation who supported us since June of 2009; offering us guidance, a means to track donations, and was our fiscal sponsor. The Board has met either biweekly or monthly since it was created in April of 2009. The Board of Directors remains stable with seven of the original members. Each Board member has a position that he or she heads besides being on the board. *Therefore the number of hours noted of 252 plus only includes the meeting times. It does not reflect the other time spent in fundraising, attending additional meetings or speaking at functions.*

The Board has recently approved the 2012 budget of \$92,000. Every dollar donated is returned to the functions of Our Neighbors' Place, Inc. As to date ONP does not have any paid employees.

**We are extremely grateful to all of you for supporting ONP and believing in what we are doing for families and individual neighbors in Pierce and St. Croix Counties.**

Sincerely,

Mary Joan Sutton

President of Our Neighbors' Place Board