

Innsider

Winter 2011 News from Pine Street Inn

From Shelter to Housing



Mayor Thomas M. Menino, a strong advocate for Boston's homeless men and women, cuts the ribbon on Doe House, a Pine Street residence in Boston.

Pine Street has stepped up efforts to move men and women off the streets, out of shelter and into housing. To ensure the best outcome for each person, Pine Street is gradually converting shelter beds into housing opportunities.

We are engaged in a multi-year effort to shift more resources into permanent supportive housing targeted at long-term homeless individuals, said Lyndia Gai. "We've seen a decrease in the number of individuals staying in Boston shelters over the past few years, we are convinced that we are on the right track," she added.

More than 1,000 individuals were placed in housing by Pine Street, *(Continued on page 2)*

A Home for Jack

Now in his 70s, Jack used to spend most nights on a bench behind the Boston Public Library.

His life was not always like this. Jack once had a wife and a job. He had served in the Army and trained to become an electrician on the GI Bill, working in that trade for many years. Then he went through a difficult divorce and his life began to unravel.

One night and offered Jack a sandwich and a blanket. As time went on, the workers mentioned the idea of housing, but Jack was not ready. Then one day, the timing was right. Pine Street had an opening in one of their houses, and an Ag... *(Continued on page 4)*



From the President



Several years ago, an elderly man who often came to our men's shelter to use the shower facilities, passed away. He died in a tent under the Southeast Expressway. He would stay in the shelter on the coldest nights, but mostly he lived in his tent. I often tried to persuade him to come into the shelter, but to no avail.

For many years, he had worked as an electrician's assistant and had lived in a room on the edge of the South End. A year after he retired, his building was sold. Because he could not find an affordable room or get on a list for elderly housing quickly enough, he was evicted. When asked, he told me all he wanted was "my own room."

I know how simple this must sound to many of you. But affordable rooms or apartments, especially for people on fixed incomes, are not easy to come by. If they were, people would not be living in shelters.

I think of this man often because I felt we had failed him by not finding him a room before he died alone in his tent. Experiences like this just strengthen our resolve to find better answers to homelessness.

With your help, we are developing more permanent supportive housing and lessening our reliance on shelter.

As a result, we have been able to both shut down shelter beds and free up shelter capacity.

New demand has not slowed, but this approach has allowed us to open up enough capacity so that we can provide shelter to anyone who comes to our door.

We are most grateful for your continued generosity and compassion. Your support not only brings people in out of the cold, it enables us to make sure they have a place to call home.

(From Shelter to Housing, continued from page 1)

17 percent found their own housing and only 3 percent remain in our Men's Inn shelter.

In early 2010, we converted 10 percent of beds in the Women's Inn shelter to permanent housing, where we placed 10 chronically homeless women, all of whom are thriving today. Most recently, in the fall of 2010, we closed our drop-in shelter site in Boston and are providing temporary services at our main location, with the goal of moving each of these men and women into housing.

Every person placed in permanent housing is assigned a case manager who connects residents with community services and helps them rebuild a connection to the community.

For each person who moves from shelter to housing, we are ending homelessness.

Case Managers: Helping One Guest at a Time

Michael had been living on the streets for years.

When Barbara Davidson was a Pine Street Outreach worker, she would stop and talk with him when she saw him in the South End. Then in 2007, when she became manager of a Pine Street residence for chronically homeless men, one of the first things Davidson did was to go out and find Michael.

“Come here. I want to show you something,” she told him. She brought Michael to the house, took him upstairs and opened doors to two bedrooms. “Which comforter do you like? Blue or green?” she asked. “He said ‘green,’ and I said, ‘Great, then that’s your room,’” she recalls.

Because he knew and trusted Barbara, Michael agreed to try it for a night. That was three years ago, and he’s still there – now one of 11 residents.

Working with longtime homeless guests can be a challenge, but it’s one Davidson relishes. “It’s great getting to know the residents,” she explains. “I love to read and compare getting to know them to reading a book. Page by page, as you listen and talk to them, they’re opening up, and you’re able to learn more about their lives.”

Davidson also knows how important it is to individualize programs for each resident. Some enjoy riding one of the house’s three bicycles for recreation or to run errands; others like taking care of dogs that have been abused or abandoned; still others respond to reading books and discussing history.

This month was bittersweet, as Davidson was preparing to bid farewell to three residents who were moving to their own apartments. “It’s so exciting to see the men move on to more independent lives,” she says. “That’s what it’s all about.”



Case manager Barbara Davidson greets a resident who is thriving in his new home.

Coming in from the Cold

When the temperature dips below freezing, Pine Street Outreach staff expands services to ensure the safety of men and women on the streets. A van is added to the daytime Outreach effort, and daytime and nighttime Outreach are extended by several hours.

Counselors advise individuals on the street to come inside and offer rides to shelter. Those who elect to remain outdoors receive warm clothes, extra blankets and hot food. The Men’s and Women’s Inn shelters, which regularly open their doors at 4 p.m., remain open around the clock.

If you suspect someone is suffering from extreme cold, please call 911.

A Lasting Legacy

Pine Street Mourns Passing of Longtime Supporter Beryl Bunker



Pine Street Inn lost a great friend with the passing of committed volunteer, community leader and pioneering businesswoman Beryl Bunker in August 2010. Thirty years ago, Beryl founded the Women's Council to assist in the work of our Women's Inn shelter. This volunteer

group, which evolved into the Council for Pine Street Inn, counted Beryl as a member throughout the years until her death at 91.

"Beryl was a mentor to us all, an active volunteer and donor," recalls Pine Street President Lyndia Downie. "She was funny and down-to-earth. Even after she got sick, she remained active.

Beryl really understood what giving back meant."

A retired senior vice president at John Hancock, Beryl gave generously to Pine Street both with her time and through her financial support. She was an early and enthusiastic advocate for planned giving and among the first to support Pine Street through a charitable gift annuity.

Many at Pine Street will thrive thanks to Beryl Bunker's vision and generosity.

Luncheon Brings Together Paul Sullivan Society Members

Last fall, members of the Paul Sullivan Society, named in honor of Pine Street's legendary founder, gathered for a special luncheon.

Guests heard from Lyndia Downie, Pine Street's president, on progress in reducing shelter and increasing housing. Frank van Overbeeke, Pine Street's new executive chef, talked about his transition from a French restaurant on Newbury Street to Pine Street and his vision for the food service training program and *Abundant Table*, Pine Street's food-based social enterprise.

The Paul Sullivan Society recognizes donors who have remembered our guests and tenants in their estate plans.

If you have included Pine Street in your will, trust, life insurance policy or other planned gift, please let us know so we may acknowledge your generosity.

For more information on joining the Paul Sullivan Society, contact Alicia Ianiere at alicia.ianiere@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9177.

(A Home for Jack, continued from page 1)

Jack was wary of just about everything, including the offer of housing. But he had become tired of living on the streets, so he agreed to check it out and try one night. That one night has now turned into over two years.

Most days, Jack wakes up at 6 a.m. and goes for a walk around Boston. He likes going to the library to read books on history. Most of all, he enjoys heading home at the end of the day.

Serving Up Hope

Innkeepers Support Pine Street Year-Round

Homelessness is a challenge every month of the year that's why Pine Street Inn works year-round to find housing solutions. Now, you can join us in our mission of ending homelessness by becoming an Innkeeper.



Become an Innkeeper and receive Pine Street's eco-friendly bag as a gift.

Innkeepers are a special group of friends who make monthly gifts that are automatically charged to a credit card or checking account, giving us a reliable source of income and helping save time and money on printing and mailing costs.

Joining is easy: you decide the amount and authorize monthly deductions to Pine Street Inn. You can change or discontinue your participation any time.

Become an Innkeeper today your ongoing support will mean so much as men and women move forward on their journey out of homelessness.

For more information, contact Judi Jackson at judi.jackson@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9171.

SAVE THE DATE

Friday 3:00 PM
) % 5:00 PM
Marriott Copley Place

Be part of this special event as we raise critical funds in our effort to end homelessness.

For details and sponsorship opportunities, contact Michelle Caldeira at michelle.caldeira@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9176

Join the Breakfast Club

Donate Cereal

Every morning, Pine Street's kitchen staff, along with dedicated volunteers, serves a nutritious breakfast to 650 guests of our men's and women's shelters.

A typical breakfast includes fresh fruit, pastry, milk, juice and coffee, but cereal is our breakfast mainstay. In fact:

1. Breakfast cereal is served every morning;

2. We serve a variety of multi-grain cereals.

3. We serve a variety of multi-grain cereals.

We are asking you student groups, church groups and others to help us by raising money to offset the cost of cereal in bulk packaging from warehouse stores.

Become part of the Breakfast Club at Pine Street Inn, and help our guests get a healthy start to the day.

To learn more about conducting a cereal drive, contact Jack Nolan at jack.nolan@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.7780.

Serve Breakfast

Sisters Ginny and Joann Ellington are up early Wednesday mornings to serve breakfast at the Men's Inn.

The guys seem to look forward to checking in with us every week, says Ginny. We've enjoyed getting to know so many of them by name and really enjoy hearing when they've gotten housing or a job.



Joann Ellington (r), a mortgage broker, makes a donation to Pine Street in honor of each new mortgage.

For more information on providing or serving meals, contact Corie Fields at corie.fields@pinestreetinn.org or 617.892.9186.

