

The Doorway

A Newsletter for

Homeless Missourians Information System

...a tool towards housing all Missourians.

VOLUME 3
ISSUE 3



"THE WELFARE OF THE PEOPLE SHALL BE THE SUPREME LAW"

MISSOURI ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE – SINCE 1901

HMIS Update

Agencies Participating in the HMIS

	McKinney-Vento Funded	Unfunded
Agencies	25	78
On-Line	25	20
<i>Total On-Line</i>	45	
<i>Percentage</i>	44.7%	

Beds/Units Participating in the HMIS

	McKinney-Vento Funded	Unfunded
Beds/Units	394	369
On-Line	394	281
<i>Total On-Line</i>	675	
<i>Percentage</i>	88.5%	

MASW Selects Executive Director



Bob Quinn has been selected by the Missouri Association for Social Welfare as its new Executive Director, MASW President Joe Yancey announced today. The selection was made by the association's Board of Directors.

"We are extremely excited about Bob's selection as the new executive director", Yancey said. "Bob's leadership experience, commitment to social justice and knowledge of the public policy environment in Missouri are assets that will be invaluable to MASW in meeting the challenges of today as well as those of the future."

Quinn, 50, of Jefferson City, was formerly Executive Director of the Missouri Public Service Commission. He was chief lobbyist for the Missouri chapter of the National Education Association throughout most of the 1990's.

Quinn was an elected official in North St. Louis County, where he grew up, serving three terms in the Missouri House of Representatives (1987-1992) after four years on the Ferguson City Council. He has a master's degree in Political Science from the University of Missouri – St. Louis.

The Missouri Association for Social Welfare, based in Jefferson City, is a citizen membership organization founded in 1901. It is the mission of MASW to provide the leadership, research, education and advocacy to improve public policies and programs impacting the health and welfare of all people in Missouri. MASW envisions Missouri becoming a more just, equitable and democratic society that assures every person's health, safety, security, independence, human rights, dignity and the opportunity to reach full potential.

"The welfare of the people shall be the supreme law," Quinn said. "My number one job will be to remind our government officials that this is our state motto, and it really means something."

Increase the Missouri Housing Trust Fund

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund:

- provides grants and loans to organizations that provide housing assistance for very low-income families and the homeless in Missouri
- supports programs that prevent families from becoming homeless
- provides operating support for homeless shelters and transitional housing
- provides home repairs and accessibility improvements for low-income homeowners and rental assistance for low-income families
- provides housing-related services for low-income families
- supports the development of affordable housing

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund Works! In 2003, 15,169 individuals and in 2004, 16,015 individuals were helped to stay in their homes through emergency rental and mortgage assistance programs supported by the Missouri Housing Trust Fund.

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund Saves Money! When families lose their homes, it can cost thousands of dollars in shelter assistance, utility deposits, rental deposits, service coordination and case management. The average annual cost to a community for each chronically homeless person is \$40,000-60,000. Permanent supportive housing can cost less than \$12,000 per year.

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund Helps Stabilize Families and Communities! Preventing foreclosures, evictions and negative impacts on credit scores helps reduce homelessness and stabilize communities, saving local, state and federal programs million of dollars and adding value for realtors, mortgage brokers and other home or property owners.

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund Gives a Big Bang for Our Buck! Since 1994, a \$3 fee has been collected on real estate transactions by each recorder of deeds in Missouri and deposited into the Missouri Housing Trust Fund. Increasing this fee to \$10 could help an estimated 35,000 additional Missourians to stay in their homes or to find shelter in times of need. The funds are valued for their flexibility to address housing needs, can be matched by federal dollars, and provide a source of revenue not dependent on annual state budget allocations.

Increasing Missouri's Housing Trust Fund will help more Missourians; is a sound investment in Missouri's future; is a proven strategy; takes so little, means so much.

The Missouri Housing Trust Fund helps families work, stay together and in their homes.

Please support the Missouri Housing Trust Fund increase.

—Dan Buck, St. Patrick's Center, St. Louis, 314-802-0194;
Roy Jones, Community Caring Council, Cape Girardeau, 573-651-3747;
A. Michael Klein, The Salvation Army, Kansas City, 816-285-2796; and
Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW)

2006 Site Visits

Agency Interviews were conducted with the agencies currently on-line with the Homeless Missourians Information System (HMIS). There were 34 interviews conducted, which included *only* the agencies within the Balance of State and the main office of each community action agency (except OACAC as the main office is located Springfield). The agencies were interviewed during June, July, August, September, and October of 2006, and were visited by Sandy Wilson, HMIS Director.

The key component of the visit this year was Data Quality. This focus included a one-on-one walk-through of the software as well as a series of questions crafted to elicit some insight on what the agencies collect, how they collect it, and to seek out possible training needs. The interviews also included questions, which allowed for feedback on the system, as well as verification of compliance with the rules and regulation of the Department of Housing Urban and Development (HUD) and Missouri Association for Social Welfare (MASW). The one-on-one training and Data Quality questionnaire proved to be valuable both to the HMIS staff as well as to the agencies and their users alike.

Regarding compliance with HUD and MASW rules and regulations, overall, the vast majority of agencies met all the requirements. However, due to a misunderstanding of the requirements that must be included in each agency's Privacy Policy, regarding the question, Does the agency currently have a privacy policy all agencies were marked for follow-up. Sample Privacy Policies will be sent to each agency in conjunction with an explanation of what components are required to be included in their agency's Privacy Policy. Staff is asking each agency to supply a copy of their Privacy Policy for verification and future sample copies.

Verification of finding corrections are in process and need to be completed by mid-month. All agencies compliancy must be verified by the HMIS office. We are in the process of completing a Site Visit Summary Report, which summarizes each agencies findings, corrections made, if any, and whether or not the agency is in compliance with the policies and procedures of the project. In addition, letters regarding compliancy will be sent out to each agency upon completion of finding corrections during the month of December.

—Rosanna Cassidy, HMIS Project Assistant

**“We can’t stop now,” Linda Perry,
Outreach Director of Bethel Purim Ministries**

Bethel Purim in Booneville provides daycare service; a domestic violence shelter called WINGS; and assists those who find themselves stranded along the highway providing them with food, gas, and hotel stay. The agency is also a part of the Booneslick Area Community Coalition. In addition, they are affiliates of the Angel Food Ministries. Each month the Angel Food Ministries takes orders for food boxes, which cost \$25 and can be purchased with cash, money orders, and even food stamps, with no limit on the number of boxes purchased. This affiliation provides a two-fold assistance: (1) It provides a large amount of food to people at a low cost and (2) Bethel Purim gets a part of the proceeds to assist with continued assistance of their clients. Those interested in placing an order can contact Linda.

Bethel Purim is a participating agency of the Balance of State Homeless Missourians Information System (HMIS) project. The agency is not funded by any type of funding source that requires participation. The participation of Bethel Purim Ministries is one of choice, or as Linda said, one of need. Linda stated to me that she knew she needed something to help her to keep better track of clients. She told me, “I wanted to especially thank you Rosanna for creating the intake form for me. It has really helped out tremendously. Before I was not getting all the information I needed, not just for HMIS but also for reports for the Board.” She went on to say that the intake form allows her to capture all the information she needs and to show that *paper-trail* more accurately.

The HMIS is great at keeping track of clients and services provided to them and she finds the HMIS especially beneficial with generating reports. In comparison, she stated, it would take her as long as two weeks to get all the data needed for a report, often even missing report deadlines, since she began using the HMIS it is only a matter of opening up the software and clicking the report she needs. “I especially find this useful when the Board asks me for some numbers,” she told me, “all I got to do is click and wait for it to print out. It is that simple. It’s great!”

The agency assists 150-200 people per month and an additional 150 a year are assisted through the domestic violence shelter. Like many agencies that assist people with low-income, they regularly exceed their maximum, but as Linda said, “We can’t stop now.” She went on to say that the ministry has been working hard for five years and they will continue to do so. She will not be happy until all people are fed, clothed, and housed, preferably in their own home. She often asks herself and others, “What can we do to make it better? What do we need to do?” And while there may not be an immediate answer or solution, the staff of Bethel Purim Ministries will continue to seek out this answer until all Missourians are fed, clothed, and housed.

--Rosanna Cassidy, HMIS Project Assistant

Welcome the new HMIS Director



Sandy Wilson joined MASW as the HMIS Project Director effective July 1, 2006. She brings with her over 11 years of experience working at the local agency level in the field of domestic and sexual violence in both rural and urban areas, and at the state level in the field of child abuse prevention. Sandy has served on state board of officers for the Missouri Coalition Against Sexual Assault and the Missouri Network of Victim Assistance.

She served as Co-Chair for the Children Affected by Violence Committee of the St. Louis Region of the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence, and was Vice-Chair for the St. Louis Neighborhood Network. Sandy was involved with creating the St. Louis City’s Multi-Disciplinary Case Consultation Review Team that worked with St. Louis City’s Children’s Division on cases involving domestic violence, and co-facilitated those reviews.

Sandy, a long time social justice advocate at heart, is delighted to make the move to MASW working to address the needs of all homeless in the state of Missouri.

HUD’s 3rd Annual National HMIS Conference

The Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) third annual National Homeless Management Systems (HMIS) Conference was held in Denver, Colorado on September 18-19, 2006. The conference provided an opportunity for communication and information sharing between HUD, Continuums of Care, HMIS Administrators, HMIS Solutions Providers, research partners, and state Police Academy Leaders. The conference posted its highest ever attendee approval rating. Almost 550 Continuum of Care Leaders, HMIS Administrators, project managers, policy academy members, researchers, software providers, and other stakeholders attended. All 50 states were represented as well as the District of Columbia, Guam, the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, American Samoa and Canada.

The conference featured three plenary sessions, eight workshops, and 17 breakout sessions. Attendees were able to choose from breakout sessions in four topic areas: HMIS Management, HMIS Participation, Data Analysis & Reporting, and Performance Measurement & Evaluation. The conference also included six roundtable discussions as well as the opportunity for one-on-one consultations with HMIS experts and software providers.

The HMIS Conference was attended by Sandy Wilson, HMIS Project Director, MASW; and Tom Gould, Census Project, MASW.

--Sandy Wilson, HMIS Project Director
--Based on information from the HUD website

Missouri Housing Development Commission Hires Trust Fund Balance of State Coordinator

Edwin Cooper began his position with the Missouri Housing Development Commission (MHDC) on October 23, 2006. His official title is "Trust Fund Balance of State Coordinator."



Edwin holds an undergraduate degree in Agriculture-Business, from Lincoln University and Master of Science Degree in Public Administration from Southeast Missouri State University. His tenure with the State of Missouri includes Missouri Department of Mental Health, Office of Administration, University of Missouri Extension and Lincoln University. His work at Missouri Department of Mental Health, as the Affordable Housing Consultant included the coordination of local efforts of, and proving consultation to, mental health services providers and consumers, local community groups, faith-based organizations, housing developers in the development of affordable housing for people with disabilities and also the homeless. During his time at the Department of Mental Health Edwin conducted the Regional Housing Team Meetings on quarterly basis in the rural Balance of State. He also participated in Homeless Coalitions in the out state areas which include Springfield, Joplin and St. Joseph. Coordinated and administered the Department of Mental Health Shelter Plus Care (S + C) rental assistance programs in the non-metropolitan and rural area including Springfield Joplin and St. Joseph.

--Sandy Wilson, HMIS Project Director

Missouri Housing Development Commission Schedule of Balance of State CoC Regional Housing Team Meetings

The Balance of State Continuum of Care (CoC) has set the dates for the Fall 2006 Regional Housing Team Meetings. The Balance of State CoC is comprised of the 99 rural counties in Missouri. The Governor's Committee to End Homelessness, which oversees the Balance of State CoC, has divided the state into ten Regional Housing Team areas for the Continuum of Care planning as well as for providing information and technical assistance around other housing issues: affordable housing development, housing for persons with disabilities, NIMBY, Fair Housing Choice, and landlord tenant laws. The ten Regional Housing Team Meetings dates and locations are listed below.

Date	Time	Location
Tuesday, December 5	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Pettis County Community Partnership 515 South Kentucky, Sedalia, MO
Wednesday, December 6	1:00 pm to 3:00 pm	Salvation Army 1108 West Ash, Columbia, MO
Thursday, December 7	10:00 am to Noon	Community Services, Inc. of Northwest MO 1212 B. South Main, Maryville, MO
Friday, December 8,	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Northeast Missouri Community Action 1011 S. Jamison, Kirksville, MO
Monday, December 11	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	DAEOC 99 Skyview Road, Portageville Mo
Tuesday, December 12	9:00 am to 11:00 am	Community Caring Council, Kasten Community Room 937 Broadway, Cape Girardeau, MO
Tuesday, December 12	2:00 pm to 4:00 pm	Ozark Foothills Regional Planning Commission 3019 Fair Street, Poplar Bluff, MO
Wednesday, December 13	1:00 pm to 3:00 pm	Ozark Action 720 E Main, West Plains, Mo
Thursday, December 14	10:00 am to Noon	Church Army, Old School Building 601 6 th Street, Branson, MO

The Missouri Housing Development Commission, a member agency of the Governor's Committee, has hired a Trust Fund Balance of State Coordinator who will facilitate the quarterly meetings in each of the ten regions, in order to encourage local agencies and other stakeholders to collaborate by working on their own areas' of housing and homelessness needs – in other words, extending the benefits of a statewide Continuum of Care planning process to the local level.

These Fall meetings are especially important as the main topic will be the Point-in-Time count mandated by HUD. The Balance of State CoC has chosen the date of January 24, 2007 as the date of the winter Point-in Time count. This meeting will focus on identifying local Team Leaders, forming the local team, strategizing the local count efforts, and many more important details. You are encouraged to invite other identified team members and local media to attend this Team Meeting with you. For more information please contact Edwin Cooper, MHDC Trust Fund Balance of State Coordinator at ecooper@mhdc.com.

--Sandy Wilson, HMIS Project Director

--Based on information from Regional Housing Meeting Resource Book – from the Department of Mental Health and the Governor's Committee to End Homelessness

Mobilizing for Justice
106th Annual MASW Conference

Today, basic human services are being eroded at a frightening pace. Hunger and food insecurity is again on the increase; the minimum wage has remained stagnant for 10 years; at least 850,000 Missourians are uninsured; and people are being released from unsafe and overcrowded prisons ill-prepared for re-entry. Now is the time to restore fairness, equity, and social justice to Missouri. MASW asked that we all “Mobilize for Justice!” for this year’s annual conference.

The conference had over 150 attendees and had several speakers, such as: James Thindwa, Director of Jobs with Justice, Chicago, IL; Sheila Crowley, President of National Low Income Housing Coalition, Washington, DC; Ellen Teller, Food Research & Action Center, Washington, DC, Isabel Friedenzohn, Senior Associate of AcademyHealth, Washington, DC; Jared Bernstein, author of All Together Now, The State of Working America, and The Benefits of Full Employment; and Sister Helen Prejean, author of Dead Man Walking and The



Death of Innocence. While each speaker brought forward key issue ideas, suggestions, and thoughts for everyone to take away with them, I think Sister Helen was a tsunami in the ocean of knowledge.



Sister Helen presentation was incredible. As I think back on it, I ask myself, ‘How do I possibly start? How can I possibly relay her message even remotely similar?’ Then it came to me, we recorded her speech, of course, but in addition to that a short four-minute snippet was made. The best way to convey her powerful message is to give it to you as she said it.

Sister Helen Prejean:

“When you look at your 10 o’clock evening news, if we make it to 10 o’clock, we’re going to see something about violence, because it’s the most dramatic type of news to get. Now, they probably won’t talk about us being here or people doing all kinds of good things. But anybody who was mugged, anybody who was raped, or anybody who attempted theft that’s what they play up and people see it before they go to bed at night. We begin to have this exaggerated sense of how scary everything is and how in danger we are. And we got gated communities. We got two million people in a gated community called *prisons*, an exorbitant number of people in prison. One in every three young African American men, ages 18 to 29, are in the prison system in this country. Isn’t that unspeakable?! And now we got gated communities on the other end where people with a lot of money have gated themselves in, too. It’s just us in the middle are the only ones walking around free, because we are so scared.

Mobilizing for Justice continued...

“And those of us—everybody sitting in this room has dealt directly with people and then the fear goes away because we know real people. If we want to talk about *Mobilizing for Justice*, the big thing that mobilizes us is when we encounter sufferings of people. We see suffering and our hearts are moved. And then we see the systems of injustice that causes it and we can’t be neutral. Arch Bishop Tutu says that, “You can’t be neutral in the face of oppression when people are suffering.” If an elephant has his foot on the tail of a mouse and you’re watching it, and you say, ‘Well, I’m neutral,’ well the mouse doesn’t appreciate you saying you’re neutral. It’s seeing the suffering that moves us, that’s what happened to me.

I saw what happened to mommas, I saw what happened to the children. Then I wrote this man a letter and he had no one to visit him and I went to visit him. That’s the opening pages of Dead Man Walking. And I’m shocked when the guards bring him in. They had him locked in this little cubicle, behind this heavy mesh screen, and I looked through the screen and I couldn’t believe it! I couldn’t believe how human his face was! I guess I thought he must look different, yah know, because he had murdered somebody or something, I didn’t know what the crime was, yet.

We use the words getting *Mobilized for Justice* but its catching on fire and realizing one human being that we got to act; we cannot not act. That’s what Father Dan Bearigan, a Jesuit Priest, who has been to jail more times than he can name for being a prophetic witness against the military and nuclear industry and bomb making in this country. It’s like meeting Isaiah when you’re with Dan Bearigan. He said, “Once you know what you know, you cannot not do anything.” And Eavan Gabar, a Latin American, a Feminist Theologian, says, “Knowledge has an ethics. When we know something, there’s a call in it, we can’t be neutral.” And everybody sitting in this room knows just what I’m talking about tonight. And we all know some people who have done it.

Everybody honored tonight will say, ‘Look, I just did it because I was doing what I had to do. I had to do this, don’t give me any little plaque or whatever, because they can point to everybody else in here and say look what she’s doing, look what he’s doing. Look, look, everybody.’ And to belong to a group like this means we come here, we blow the coals, the fire keeps burning in our hearts, and we are energized with the love and energy that we need. And the network of community support to do the great work of God in our world. It is all about healing. It is all about dignity. It is all about being a voice for a voiceless. That’s what it’s all about. And you could have lived your whole life and not known this, but we’re awake, we’re here, and we’re blessed.”

Sister Helen Prejean’s full speech will soon be available on our website at www.masw.org for you to hear and/or download. Watch for it!

--Rosanna Cassidy, HMIS Project Assistant



National Homeless & Hunger Awareness Week November 12-18, 2006



The Governor's Committee to End Homelessness sponsored a Poster Contest to commemorate Homeless Awareness Week 2006.



Liz Hagar-Mace

All School and Head Start Programs throughout the state of Missouri were invited to participate. The contest theme was *Show Me: Families Need Homes Too*. Projects could be submitted as an individual project or as a group project.

The event began with Liz Hagar-Mace, Chairperson of the Governor's Committee to End Homelessness, recognizing all the wonderful poster submissions on display. There were 89 posters submitted from 15 different school districts submitted this year. The Committee is hoping this can become an annual event.

Major George Windham, Salvation Army, Central Regional Director, spoke to the group, he said "To understand homelessness, we must understand the term and who the homeless are. There are homeless in shelters, hospitals, mental institutions, and other places not normally designed as a place for permanent housing."



Major Windham

He went on to say, "Everyone deserves a home...families deserve to be families...be they from Missouri, Kansas, Illinois, or anywhere. Every agency tries to help their clients find the gift of being able to live on their own and provide for their families. Far too often, we face situations that we just cannot resolve. Often agencies work together to provide needed resources." His speech was moving and energizing and concluded it with these powerful words, "We as social service agencies are in the business of getting people on the treadmill of life and doing everything we can to help them once again enjoy life, cross the rivers, climb the mountains, and learn how to sing once again."

Representative Charles Schlottach spoke to the group thanking the Sullivan Elementary School First Grade Class for the wonderful work they put in on their class project. The group had taken the contest on and turned it in to a Service Learning Project that encompassed homelessness and hunger issues of people less fortunate than themselves. Their group poster submission won *Best of Contest*.

Craig Rector, Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, recognized those children present from the Sullivan Elementary School First Grade and presented them with their Best of Contest Certificates.

Below is the Best of Contest, 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place winners:

Best of Contest: Sullivan Elementary School First Grade

Head Start: 1st Place Water Color: Youth in Need Head Start, St. Louis

Head Start: 1st Place Collage: Ozark Action, Inc. West Plains

First Grade, 1st Place: Sullivan Elementary School First Grade

Second Grade, 1st Place: Gabriel Bryant, Independence Academy, Independence

Second Grade, 2nd Place: Trevor Petree, Independence Academy, Independence

Fourth Grade, 1st Place (TIE): Katie Heider, Carman Trails Elementary, St. Louis

Fourth Grade, 1st Place (TIE): Sydney Fann, Carman Trails Elementary, St. Louis

Fifth Grade, 1st Place: Tommysha Oates, Sappington Elementary, St. Louis

Fifth Grade, 2nd Place: Dara Homan, Hillsboro Intermediate, Hillsboro

Fifth Grade, 3rd Place (TIE): Madison Fears & Maggie Caine, Hillsboro Intermediate, Hillsboro

Fifth Grade, 3rd Place (TIE): Kelsey Dittman & Sophia Gunn, Thomas Hart Benton Elementary, Independence

Sixth Grade, 1st Place (TIE): Ashley Dolan, Hillsboro Intermediate, Hillsboro

Sixth Grade, 1st Place (TIE): John East & Shannon McCoy, Greenwood Lab School, Springfield

High School, 1st Place: Bobby Paez, Senior Success Campus, St. Charles

Group Project, 1st Place: Lily, Isaac & Sarah Cox, Long View Farms Elementary, Lee's Summit

Group Project, 2nd Place: Callie Johnson & Leigha Edwards, Laquey Elementary, Laquey

Group Project, 3rd Place: Ashley Edwards & Jerrica Leonard, Laquey Elementary, Laquey



The children, and their parents, of the 1st place winning school project.

--Sandy Wilson, HMIS Project Director