Dear Siena/Francis House Friends,

As you may know by now, this will be my last letter to you, friends and supporters of the Siena/Francis House. After nearly 16 years as the shelter’s Executive Director, I have retired. My last day was Friday, September 15. Please know that it’s certainly with sincere gratitude that I share this message with you.

Being able to play a part in helping fulfill the Siena/Francis House’s mission of serving people from right here in our community has been the greatest honor in my life. At its core, this mission provides really simple things – food, shelter, and clothing – to people experiencing homelessness and who truly need these most basic services. The second (and equally important) half of our mission assists these same people in acquiring the services and support they need in order to secure affordable and appropriate housing out in the community.

Those last two sentences sum up what the Siena/Francis House is all about. I cannot overstate one very important truth: This mission of serving those who are most in need in this community absolutely could not – and cannot – happen without the gracious and caring support from others in this community who have the ability to provide it. In order to serve the many thousands of people who come through our shelters’ doors each and every year, the Siena/Francis House relies on the time and talent of volunteers, as well as on the financial and in-kind donations from individuals, families, churches, schools, businesses and foundations that share this mission.

That’s how this endeavor works. Frankly, it’s the only way it can work. And, as the Siena/Francis House turns a new chapter in its leadership, I would ask you to consider how you and others with whom you come in contact can continue to support this truly important work.

Even though I’ve said this to you many times over the course of these last sixteen years, please know that your financial support and your volunteer time makes a real and meaningful difference. I can tell you that the people who find themselves in need of our services are at a point in their lives when their need will never be greater. I can also share with you that, to a person, these people are sincerely grateful that the Siena/Francis House was there to give them a hand up in their time of need. As always, I pass their gratitude on to you – friends and supporters of our mission – and add my personal thanks to you for helping make my nearly 16 years serving others so fulfilling.

Most sincerely,

MORE ON MELISSA & MALLORY

In a letter sent to Siena/Francis House friends and donors this summer, we told you about a young mom, Melissa and her infant daughter, Mallory. As background, Melissa and Mallory had become homeless after Melissa was hospitalized for three months due to a grave infection. During this time, Mallory was cared for by family friends. After slipping into and out of a coma, doctors operated on Melissa, removing portions of both lungs. She was then put on heavy doses of antibiotics and eventually released from the hospital. Melissa returned home to a pile of bills, including several months of back rent, in addition to her overwhelming medical bills.

Before, during and following her illness, Melissa was unable to clean houses, the job she’d held for more than five years. All of her savings were eaten up by medical bills. To top things off, Melissa was given notice that she was being evicted from her apartment, due to non-payment of rent. With her life spiraling beyond control, Melissa was losing hope that things could ever get better. Fortunately, though, the hospital’s social worker called the Siena/Francis House and arranged to have this newly-homeless mom and daughter stay at our shelter.

Melissa and Mallory were homeless for more than two months. During that time, our staff made sure that they received the life necessities of food, clothing and shelter. Additionally, SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE MISSION STATEMENT

The Siena/Francis House welcomes, shelters and empowers individuals experiencing homelessness to navigate their own path to safe and appropriate housing.
Saying Goodbye To Mike…

After nearly 16 years as Executive Director of the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, Mike Saklar hopes his legacy is “not just buildings and fund-raising.”

Instead, Mike hopes his contributions will reflect his tireless advocacy on behalf of the kids, women and men who experienced homelessness in our community, throughout our state and across the nation; and that he was able to enlighten his colleagues and the public as to the best ways to serve these persons.

Among the numerous awards, plaques, photographs and works of art on display in Mike’s office is a shiny steering wheel, a gift from a woman whom Mike never met. The gift arrived in 2004 in a box postmarked from Korea.

In it, a note from the donor read: “I lived in my car for two years. No one should have to live in their car.” While she had never been to the Siena/Francis House, or even to Nebraska, the donor said she was impressed when an internet search lead her to discover how everyone is unconditionally accepted, welcomed and cared for at the Siena/Francis House…and by how much of every contribution is spent on serving people in need.

The woman said she had experienced homelessness, as had her father. Her path took her to Korea where she became a teacher of English.

“That gift is another reminder of how we are inter-connected,” Mike said. Mike’s wife, Chong, is a native of Korea. They met when Mike was stationed in South Korea in the Army. They married and went on to raise three children.

At his farewell barbecue at the Siena/Francis House – held in the parking lot outside the men’s shelter – Mike traded stories with homeless guests, staff members and members of the Board of Directors.

“Remember, [name withheld for privacy]? I saw him lately and he was looking really good,” said one of Mike’s longtime colleagues and Siena/Francis House staff member, Sr. Stephanie Matcha. “He’s working and getting along pretty good,” she said.

Sometimes, the news is not positive. At the barbecue, Mike also heard updates about people whose journey had brought them to the Siena/Francis House before life on the streets pulled them away.

Statistics collected over the past 15 years show a 100 percent increase in the number of meals served and nights spent at the shelter.

“We’ve been fortunate so many times. Just when we think we won’t know how we’ll make it, some delivery arrives from out of the blue,” Mike said. “Beds, blankets, food and toilet paper arrive unexpectedly, bringing us just what we need in the nick of time.”

For many years, the shelter’s “busy” season was the winter, when the Nebraska weather made it more likely for persons to seek shelter. Now, Mike says, there is no season to homelessness. “Our numbers during the summer went up in 2007 and 2008, but then, they never went back down, regardless of the weather,” Mike said.

The weeks before Mike officially retired on September 15 were jam-packed with celebrations, recognitions and personal thanks for the tireless executive.

Following a profile written by The Omaha World-Herald columnist, Mike Kelly, Mike appeared on each local TV news station and on several radio stations.

A retirement party for volunteers, donors and board members attracted more than 170 people to the new Omaha Marriott Downtown at the Capital District. A proclamation from the Mayor of Omaha designated September 6, 2017 as “Mike Saklar Day,” and letters from other government leaders and donors were read aloud. Mike was presented with a painting commissioned by the Board of Directors from Jeremiah Neal, a former guest at Siena/Francis House, and current board member.

Siena/Francis House staff members presented Mike with a statue depicting Jesus as a homeless person on a bench, as well as cards and endless hugs.

After the excitement of retirement settles down, Mike looks forward to spending more time with his wife, their children and their grandchildren. Mike also hopes to join his former colleagues from the City of Omaha’s Planning Department for coffee, from time to time (Mike retired from the City after 28 years, prior to becoming Siena/Francis House Executive Director).

He may pick up his hobbies left untouched for many years, including restoring antique toys, trains, cars, pottery and furniture. An expansive garden filled with unusual vegetables, herbs and spices, beckons, as does Mike’s fishing rod, unused for nearly two decades.

“I have plenty of things to look forward to,” said Mike. “But you know, I will be back and helping others. I’ve been doing that for too long to stop now. It’s in my heart and it’s who I am, whether or not I am officially retired.”

Will You Please Consider Honoring Mike Saklar With Your Donation?

To honor Mike’s tireless efforts on behalf of the organization – and especially of the many thousands of people experiencing homelessness who have utilized our shelter services over these years – will you please consider making a gift to the Siena/Francis House right now?

Please send your donation in the return envelope located within this newsletter, and just note on the front panel that your gift is in tribute to Mike Saklar. We will keep track of all gifts made in honor of Mike, and will share with him the complete list of everyone who made such a gift.

As is always the case, your gift will immediately help provide food, shelter and clothing to homeless individuals and families from our very own local community, in their hour of need. Thank you, and God bless you.
SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE WELCOMES NEW BOARD CHAIR

Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter welcomed a new Board Chair in February, but you may recognize his name. Robert Wellendorf II began serving on the Siena/Francis House’s board of directors in 2007. Rob’s service to the shelter dates back farther than that though.

“My first introduction to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter was as a college student at Creighton University over 25 years ago,” Rob said. “We were required to complete several hours of volunteer work in the community, so I served meals at the shelter. At that time, I presumed that the people I was serving were homeless because they choose to be homeless. From my limited, 19-year old perspective, I kept asking myself: ‘Why would anyone ever choose this?’

Fast forward 25 years, and Rob recognizes that homelessness is a complex issue with many contributing, often overlapping, factors, including mental illness, job loss, domestic violence, medical calamity, lack of affordable and appropriate housing, and substance abuse.

“Homelessness happens when people have no other options available to them,” Rob said. “In my opinion, though, our staff at the Siena/Francis House are experts in helping the homeless work through these obstacles. Not only does our staff provide the basic services of food, shelter and clothing, they also help people experiencing homelessness break their personal cycle of homelessness and achieve stable housing outside the shelter.”

In addition to his service at the shelter, Rob is the founder and president of Executive Solutions, a firm designed to assist business owners as they reach clarity and contentment around the impact that the business will have on their family, community, and legacy. This is achieved through Rob’s philosophy of harmonization amongst the wealth holder’s trusted tax, legal, financial, and risk management professionals. Rob holds the Chartered Advisor in Philanthropy (CAP®) designation and has over 20 years of experience in business planning, consulting and financial services. Rob and his wife Lisa enjoy family, friends and have great pride in their four children.

Rob says he gladly shares his time, talent and financial resources with Siena/Francis House as Board Chair because he knows his contributions make a real difference to both the staff and in the lives of those experiencing homelessness who come to our organization needing assistance.

Rob replaces board member Thomas Chapman, who served as Board Chair from 2015 to 2017. Tom is still an active member of the board, and the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter is grateful for his leadership in that role during the past two years.

Melissa & Mallory cont’d

we ensured that Melissa continued to receive the medical care she needed. Our staff was also able to get Melissa in touch with a local agency that specializes in housing programs. This mom and daughter duo moved into their new apartment a few weeks ago. Along with our well wishes, we sent some food, baby clothes, diapers and formula with Melissa, just to help her get a good start on her new life. And, although we haven’t heard directly from Melissa since they moved out, a representative from the housing agency shared that both Melissa and Mallory are doing well in their new place, and that Melissa is very grateful for the many blessings in her life.

Of course, we extend her thanks to all the caring and compassionate donors to our shelter, whose generosity made it possible for us to care for this little family.

Gifts to Siena/Francis House are used to provide food, shelter, clothing, and care of the people who turn to us during their hour of need, and are greatly appreciated. All of our services are provided at no cost to our guests. All gifts to Siena/Francis House are tax-deductible to the full extent of the law. Our audited financial statements are freely available by writing to Siena/Francis House, P.O. Box 217 DTS – Omaha, Nebraska – 68101. Our donor information is kept in strict confidence; our donor lists are never rented, shared, or exchanged with other organizations. The stories in our letters are real. Identifying details have been changed and file photos may be used to protect the privacy and therapeutic interest of our guests. For more information about Siena/Francis House or to include us in your estate planning, please contact Siena/ Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully, at (402) 341-1821.
FORMER GUEST NOW PROVIDES PEER SUPPORT TO HOMELESS

When Therese Montanez came to Siena/Francis House in March of 2015, she never imagined that someday she would be in recovery, giving hope to others as a state-certified Peer Support Specialist.

Therese struggled with alcoholism for over 35 years. Growing up in Chicago, she had her first alcoholic drink at nine years old, at the encouragement of her brother. By the time she was 13, Therese was drinking regularly, and her addiction was emerging. She did okay for a while, working full-time jobs, and paying her bills. “But then I just couldn’t maintain the lifestyle anymore,” she said.

Therese tried treatment four times before ending up at the Siena/Francis House. In the year leading up to her arrival, Therese moved four times, staying with friends and relatives, jumping between Omaha, Colorado and California, “couch surfing,” essentially homeless. “Everything caught up with me,” she said. “I couldn’t find a job. I was in a wreck and had a DUI. It was exhausting.” Therese also struggled with depression and anxiety.

At Siena/Francis House, Therese began the process of transforming her life in our Miracles Recovery Program. She attended individual and group therapy sessions, and worked through the 12-step program. As a participant in our shelter’s employment training program, Therese began to “give back” to Siena/Francis House’s mission by answering phones and assisting the homeless guests. Therese moved up in employment training, eventually attaining the position of Assistant Manager in the women’s shelter. After 27 months, Therese graduated from the Miracles Recovery Program.

“I can’t say that Siena/Francis House gave me my life back, because I didn’t have a life,” Therese said. “Siena/Francis House gave me a life! I am truly a miracle.”

This past May, as Therese was preparing to graduate from the Miracles Program, her counselor put her in touch with a job opportunity. The United Way of the Midlands was funding a pilot program – administered by another local non-profit organization, Community Alliance – to place Peer Support Specialists at local homeless shelters to meet the needs of homeless individuals experiencing addictions and mental health challenges. Her counselor thought Therese would be a great fit.

Therese went through a two-week training course to earn her Peer Support Specialist Certification. The classes focus on four areas of need – health, home, purpose and community – and train participants on how to offer support, education, encouragement, empathy, motivation and advocacy to people struggling with mental health challenges and substance abuse.

Therese jokes that a degree from the “School of Hard Knocks” qualifies her for this position. “They were looking for people in recovery from mental health and substance abuse challenges,” Therese said. “As a Peer Support Specialist, I let people know that I’ve been where they are, that there is hope, that recovery is possible, and I’m proof of that.”

Therese is one of four Peer Support Specialists who visit local homeless shelters. The goal of the pilot program is to empower individuals experiencing homelessness to lead a self-directed life. The Peer Support Specialists also alleviate the workload of shelter staffs. Also, because the Peer Support Specialist come to the shelters, the program makes peer support accessible for people experiencing homelessness who may not have resources to travel to such services.

Therese spends her shifts connecting with people staying at shelters and checking in to see how they are doing. She may connect them to mental health and addiction recovery resources, although most of all, she’s there as a listener, empathizer and role model. She views these relationships as mutually beneficial. “Both people are growing and learning from each other,” Therese said. “I am inspired by the strength of my peers.”

Therese enjoys contributing to the recovery of others in the community. She is thankful for the support of Siena/Francis House counselors and staff, and considers them family. She’s also grateful for the staff she works with at Community Alliance, calling them an amazing group of people. Both organizations “get it,” Therese said. “They get me.”

Therese feels beyond blessed in her new role. “When I was in treatment, I knew I wanted to give back in some capacity, like driving people to meetings, or being someone’s recovery sponsor. But giving back as a peer to women in the same situation I was in, and showing that I walked out on the other side, and get paid to do it . . . that is such a blessing!”

Another 4-Star Rating by Charity Navigator!

Donors to charitable organizations are appropriately interested in knowing that their financial support is used efficiently, ethically and responsibly. Please know that the Siena/Francis House is absolutely committed to these principles, as well. Please take a moment to review Charity Navigator’s – America’s largest independent charity evaluator – recent evaluation of the Siena/Francis House. Just go to: http://www.charitynavigator.org to read why the Siena/Francis House has once again earned their highest – 4-Star – rating for fiscal responsibility. Type in “Siena/Francis House” in their charity search box to learn the details of why Charity Navigator has the confidence to award our shelter with their highest, “exceptional” designation. Please also check out the 4-Star citation we recently received from Charity Navigator, found on page 6 of this newsletter.
DATE: Calendar Year 2017 (and beyond)
TO: Siena/Francis House Donors
FROM: Tim Sully, Development Director
SUBJECT: Important Tax Legislation Regarding Donating Directly From IRAs

In December of 2015, the United States Congress passed – and the President signed into law – legislation commonly referred to as the “Protecting Americans from Tax Hikes (PATH) Act”. **A provision of this legislation MAKES PERMANENT** tax-related benefits available to individuals aged 70 ½ and older who have an IRA and who make direct transfers of any or all of their Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from the IRA to qualified charities – such as the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter – without the donor first having to recognize the distribution as income.

This law, which allows you to make **tax-free transfers directly from your IRA or Roth IRA assets to a qualified charity**, like the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, can provide you with a number of planning benefits, including:

- Direct, tax-free transfers of IRA assets to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter, can be counted against your required minimum distribution (RMD).
- Direct, tax-free transfers of IRA assets to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter will not increase your adjusted gross income for your yearly federal income tax purposes.
- These direct, tax-free transfers make it easier to utilize IRA assets, during one’s lifetime, to make charitable gifts.

How does this work? You may make **tax-free transfers from your IRA or Roth IRA if:**

- You are 70 ½ years old or older.
- Your cumulative tax-free transfers to charity do not exceed $100,000 per tax year.
- Your tax-free transfers are made directly from your IRA or Roth IRA to a qualified public charity, like the Siena/Francis House and NOT to donor-advised funds, supporting organizations or private foundations.

**Transfers completed by December 31, 2017 will be free of federal income tax this year, and the gift qualifies for the donor's 2017 required minimum distribution from his or her IRA. Again, this tax legislation HAS BEEN MADE PERMANENT, so it will be in effect in 2017 and in all subsequent years.**

NOTE: If you wish to take advantage of this opportunity, but hold retirement assets outside of an IRA or Roth IRA, you will need to convert your current assets to a Rollover IRA, prior to initiating a gift.

Please act now to support the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter – and to fulfill your own charitable goals – by taking advantage of the planning options available to you from this significant legislation. Or, if you would like us to coordinate with your fund custodian a direct transfer of funds from your IRA or Roth IRA to the Siena/Francis House, please contact our Development Director, Tim Sully, at 402-341-1821 or by e-mail at tsully@sienafrancis.org.

Thank you very much for considering taking advantage of this excellent charitable-giving opportunity!
February 1, 2017

Mike Saklar
Siena/Francis House
1702 Nicholas Street
Omaha, NE 68102

Dear Mike Saklar:

On behalf of Charity Navigator, I wish to congratulate Siena/Francis House on attaining the coveted 4-star rating for demonstrating strong financial health and commitment to accountability and transparency.

The nonprofit sector is advancing and expanding. As our organizations evolve, so do the desires and interests of our supporters. Astute donors are yearning for greater accountability, transparency, and for concrete results from us. With more than 1.5 million American charities, Charity Navigator aims to accentuate the work of efficient and transparent organizations. The intent of our work is to provide donors with essential information to give them greater confidence in both the charitable decisions that they make and the nonprofit sector.

Based on the most recent information available, we have issued a new rating for your organization. We are proud to announce Siena/Francis House has earned our sixth consecutive 4-star rating. This is our highest possible rating and indicates that your organization adheres to sector best practices and executes its mission in a financially efficient way. Attaining a 4-star rating verifies that Siena/Francis House exceeds industry standards and outperforms most charities in your area of work. Only 5% of the charities we evaluate have received at least 6 consecutive 4-star evaluations, indicating that Siena/Francis House outperforms most other charities in America. This exceptional designation from Charity Navigator sets Siena/Francis House apart from its peers and demonstrates to the public its trustworthiness.

Forbes, Business Week, and Kiplinger's Financial Magazine, among others, have profiled and celebrated our unique method of applying data-driven analysis to the charitable sector. We evaluate ten times more charities than our nearest competitor and currently attract more visitors to our website than all other charity rating groups combined, thus making us the leading charity evaluator in America. Our data shows that users of our site donated more than they planned to before viewing our findings, and in fact, it is estimated that last year Charity Navigator influenced approximately $10 billion in charitable gifts.

Your achievement and the 4-star rating will enhance your organization's fundraising and public relations efforts. Our favorable review of Siena/Francis House's financial health and commitment to accountability & transparency is now visible on our website.

We wish you continued success in your charitable endeavors.

Sincerely,

Michael Thatcher
President and CEO

Michael Thatcher
Presdent and CEO
SIENA/FRANCIS HOUSE
DONOR BILL OF RIGHTS

Philanthropy is based on voluntary action for the common good. It is a tradition of giving and sharing that is primary to the quality of life of our community. To assure that philanthropy merits the respect and trust of the general public, and that donors and prospective donors can have full confidence in our organization, the Siena/Francis House declares that all donors have these rights:

1. To be informed of the Siena/Francis House’s mission, of the way our organization intends to use donated resources, and of our capacity to use donations effectively and efficiently for their intended purposes;
2. To be informed of the identity of those serving on the Siena/Francis House’s Board of Directors, and to expect the board to exercise prudent judgement in its stewardship responsibilities;
3. To have access to the Siena/Francis House’s most recent financial statements;
4. To receive appropriate acknowledgment and recognition;
5. To expect that all relationships with individuals representing the Siena/Francis House will be professional in nature, and that information about your donations is handled with respect and confidentiality;
6. To be assured that donor information will never be shared with any other organization;
7. To be assured that those seeking donations for the Siena/Francis House are not hired solicitors, and that 100% of your donations are utilized by the Siena/Francis House;
8. To be assured your gifts will be used for the purpose of furthering our mission of providing food, shelter, clothing, outreach, and addiction recovery to those most in need in our community;
9. To have the opportunity for your name to be deleted from our mailing list;
10. To feel free to ask questions when making a donation, and to receive prompt, truthful, and forthright answers.

Adapted from the American Association of Fundraising Counsel, Association for Healthcare Philanthropy, Council for Advancement and Support of Education, Association of Fundraising Professionals

Updated: September 2017

Have you remembered the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter in your will? Estate gifts go a long way in caring for those most in need from our own local community.

DONATE USED AUTOMOBILES

Do you have an old car, truck, or van that you’re not sure what to do with? You may wish to consider donating it to the Siena/Francis House.

Through this donation, you will provide a “hand up” to a person in our addiction recovery program who is graduating and moving out of the House and onto his or her own. Besides the satisfaction you will get for helping this graduate to become a contributing member of our community, you will also receive a letter of receipt, allowing you to claim a “fair market value” deduction for this vehicle donation on your taxes. Please contact Siena/Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully at tsully@sienafrancis.org or at 402-341-1821 if you have any questions regarding making a vehicle donation.

On behalf of the graduate who will greatly benefit from your donation, thank you, in advance, for your thoughtful consideration.
Memorials & Living Tributes

In Memory Of...
All our deceased family members
James and Arline Jirsak
Arthur
Rita Obermeier
Dan, Rod, and Cindy
Betty Burt
Fannie
Norma Harrow
Mom
Lisa Linneman
My Mom and Dad
Liz Dundis
Our Parents
Charles and Gail Dickel
Our family deceased family members
James and Barbara Willett
Poor Souls in Purgatory
Jerome Loos
Rose Mary
James and Marilyn Hannam
The men and women who died from alcoholism
Brian Keith
David E. Abboud
Nancy Abboud
Pauline Allen
Wilmer Allen
Kevin Allison
Cecelia Allison
Harold and Carol Anderson
Scott and Susan Patrick
Betty Andrews
Richard Andrews
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Jeffrey and Lynn Pirruccello
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William Beck
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Catherine Bombere
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Patricia A. Bantner
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Gloria Bartek
Aaron Bartek and Tracy Turco-Bartek
Tom Bartek
Nelson and Margherita Bartolomei
Daniel and Erin Bartolomei
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Shirley Beyer
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Mary Anne Cronican
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Patricia Biga
Anthony Blankenau
Elaine Blankenau
Bill Blount
Reese Blount
Jim and Naomi Bodnar
Elizabeth Johnson
Henry Francis “Speck” Boos
Dianne Boos
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Mary Kay Connor
Wayne Coons
Megan Lemburg
Charlotte Corell, Oblate of St. Benedict at Mt. Michael
Roscoe Corell
Marcia Ann Corvig
David Gann
Audrey Cotton
Max and Elsie Snowdon
Gerald (Gerry) Coufal
Mary Coufal
Terrance and Dorothy Dewald
Mary Ann Jaworski
Joseph and Regina Slavik
Kathy Soula
Terrence and Barbara Veleba
J. Allen Craig
Mary E. Craig
Cronican Family
Mary Anne Cronican
Claudine Crosby
Michelle Wasinger
We are grateful to acknowledge the following contributors. This listing includes donations given as a memorial or in honor of a special person/occasion, but not all other contributions (for the period of February 1, 2017 through July 31, 2017).

Millard “Boz” Crouch
Gertrude Crouch
Debra Daly
Mayrene Bentley
Linda DeBolt
Ryan DeBolt
John and Anne Demyan
Barb McKenn
Eileen Denninger
Rita Schall
Bernie Devlin
Michael Arnold
Brian and Angela Bellinghausen
Bruce Blenden
Daniel and Sharon Burns
Kim Carpenter
Joan Clements
Timothy and Christine Connor
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L.T. Fitzgerald
Barry and Mary Gerken
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Marilyn Kirchhoff
Laura Kubick
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Craig Vance
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Terry and Susan Wilwerding
Judy Lynn Dierks
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Brian Robert and Lou Riggs
Grandsons - Bob, Jon, Matt & Drew
Clarence and Margaret Hansen
Holy Mother Mary
Grant Newbold
Jesus
Howard and Mary Denker
Maynard
Anonymous
Melissa & Mallory
Alvin and Gayle Backes
Merry Hearts Choir at Elmwood Tower
Patricia Watts
My Mother
Richard and Louise Webb
Our Father
Terry Lucas
Paul
Charles and Susan Adams
Rachel
Thomas and Barbara Sladek
Siena Francis House Staff
Jamie Siciliano-Pepin
Success of our new president
Richard and Jill Werner
Thanksgiving
Margaret Dusakto
Thanksgiving for answered prayer
Margaret Dusakto
The Homeless
Anonymous
Larry Weiss and Mary Jo Barbush-Weiss
The Hope of a New Life
Brenda Hennings
The teachers of Nate and Margaret White
Mary Jo White
Those in recovery who share their experience, strength and hope
Michelle Gess
Deacon Fred Abboud
Steve and Marge Harman
Steve Abraham
Joseph Buschelman
Michael J. Andersen
Harry and Jean Andersen
Tyler Lee Anderson
Cheri Abels
Ryan Ballish - working toward Eagle Scout Award
Sally Smith
Bob Bertrande & Kathy Kennedy
Kathleen Bradley
Ethan Patrick Britt for Confirmation
Gerald and Lisa Britt
Buster Brown & Lynn Corbeil
Kathleen Bradley
Jimmy Carter
John Rogers
Ann Charvat
Lucille Wisinski
Linda and Linda Crouch
Nancy Nothwehr
Patty Cunningham
Paige Murphy
Rachel Dethlefs
Michael Vanek
Doug Diggins
Anonymous

Jeff Dobson
Thomas and Susan Bizzarri
Chris and Janez Egan
Doug and Kristi Miskimins
Mary Ann and Walt Ernesti - 50th Wedding Anniversary
Rodney and Carolyn Lugert
Brian Panizek and Mary Parizek
James and Verne Finn
Eileen Kroeber
Terry Finney - 80th Birthday
Ray and Molly Swiercek
Mildred Fritz
Helen Plugge
Ann Gaul
Scott Gaul
Scott Giess - Recovery from cancer
Steven and Debi Giles
Lois Givens
Chris and Maureen Klotz
Dick Glazer
Jim Glazer
Brandon Godden
Shelby Winnall
Arthur “Arty” Gomez
Sister Stephanie Matcha
Zev Gordman
Jeff and Danielle Gordman
Zev Dan Gordon - Bar Mitzvah
Steve Siref
Wedding Guests of Michael Greene and Christie Abdul-Greene
Michael Greene and Christie Abdul-Greene
Rev. Michael W. Grewe
Catherine Haley
Kay Haley
Thomas and Elizabeth Haley
Julie Hartman
William Kelly
John Hauschild
Richard and Jennifer Cunningham
Marilyn Humphrey
Andy Myers
Bakari Hunt
Tony Hunt
Bob and Sheryl Jackson - Marriage
Matt Setakowski
In celebration of the marriage of Sheryl Pitner and Bob Jackson
Loren and Michaela Lintner
Bill and Carolyn Kaplan
Jason Dworak
Garrett Karlson - Eagle Scout
Christopher and M. Celeste Sully Firenebach
Dan and Joan Kash
Susan Kash-Brown
Trey Kellin
T. Patrick and Catherine Ryan
Kevin Kitrell
Reese Blount
Mildred Koenig
George Koenig
Rogene Korth
James and Tamera Loftis
Kottenstette Family
Sarah Kottenstette
Fr. James Krmpair
Jerry and Jeanette Tomjack
Scott Lancaster
Scott and Rebecca Lancaster
Doug Lenz - Diaconate Ordination
Andrew and Adrienne Connor
Zaidi Liwaru
Anonymous
Gabrielle Liwaru
We are grateful to acknowledge the following contributors. This listing includes donations given as a memorial or in honor of a special person/occasion, but not all other contributions (for the period of February 1, 2017 through July 31, 2017).

**Eric Lund**  
D.D. and Beverly Johnson

**Bill Lyons**  
Michaela Neary

**Uncle Don Marasco**  
Patrick and Shirley Ramaekers

**Janet Mardis**  
Patrick and Anne O’Keefe

**Lou McCoy’s 90th Birthday**  
Sally Cihunka

**Mary Jo McCoy**  
W. Henry Looby and Steven Kotlarz

**Bob and Alice McGowan**  
Loretta McGowan

**Shirley McVicker**  
Anonymous

**Mr and Mrs. Richard Mericle’s Recent Wedding**  
Mary Rezac

**Patrick Sean Moriarty**  
Susan Christiansen

**Wilma Mulligan - 102nd Birthday**  
Norma Harrow

**Rev. Mark Nolte**  
Dave and Joanne Kolenda

**Marion Norman**  
Richard and Kirsten Calhoun

**Devin, Shane and Travis O’Connell**  
Melissa Burke  
Melissa Burke

**Mary Jane O’Donnell - in gratitude for her care as a mother and single parent**  
Ralph O’Donnell

**Robert O’Hanlon**  
Paul O’Hanlon

**Patricia O’Kane**  
William Flynn and Patricia Callone

**Ana Ortiz - 70th Birthday**  
Adrian Ortiz

**Harold Patsios**  
Richard and Judith Gray

**Father Val Peter**  
Steven and Sandra Callahan

**Margie Pierson - 80th Birthday**  
Deanna Hobza

**Father John Pietramale**  
Stephen and Mary Kenny

**Elizabeth Pokorny - SMM Woman of the Year**  
W.C. and Shirley Nelson

**Brad Polchow**  
Mary Maruska

**Michael Redmond**  
Jim and Barb Redmond

**Deacon Wayne Reed - Ordination**  
Steve and Marge Harman

**Joe Reestman Family**  
Joseph Reestman

**Isabelle Reiss**  
Robert and Sheila Reiss

**Vicki Riordan**  
Colleen Riordan

**Me and Mary Ann Ritzdorf**  
Steven and Mary Beth Branscombe

**Pat Ross**  
Anthony Caruso  
Matt Ryder  
Karen Newby

**R. Rynazewski Family**  
Cecelia Rynazewski

**SFH Treatment Program**  
John Atherton

**Mike Saklar - for his good work**  
Stephanie Bess

**Barbara Brizzee**

**Wedding of Matt and Linda Sakowski**

**Linda Chilcott**

**Frances Clary- Leiferman**

**Steven and Kamion Garner**

**Gerard and Bridget Kowal**

**Kathleen Nemitz**

**Jayne Schram**

**Patty Sully**

**Charles and Janice Wear**

**Weigel Williamson Low Vision Center**

**Joel and Cynthia Wenninghoff**

**Rita Yasson**

**Kate Saniuk**

**Daniel Saniuk**

**Robert and Marie Schumacker - 60th Anniversary**

**Gerald and Leona Rickabaugh**

**Father James Schwertley**

**Edward and Jeanne Galz**

**Harold Nicolas and Kay Strong-Nicolas**

**Sheila Pille**

**Rosemary Schmitz**

**Gerald Thompson**

**Ronald and Linda Van Oeveren**

**Siena Francis House**

**Ward Sladek**

**Ward Sladek**

**Thomas and Barbara Sladek**

**Verlene Slama**

**Carol Slama**

**Shellee Spellman**

**Hugh and Colleen Spellman**

**Bob Stanek**

**Robert and Shayla Stanek**

**Roxie Stemple - Birthday**

**Jean Mutz**

**Ryan Sully - Eagle Scout Award**

**Christopher and M. Celeste Sully Feuerbach**

**Paul and Anna Sparwasser**

**Sr. Liz Sully on her 80th birthday**

**Patty Sully**

**Tim Sully**

**Roger Bergman and Wendy Wright**

**Franklin Tabor**

**Carmen Tabor**

**Duane Thelen**

**Alan Thelen and Sandra Maas Thelen**

**Deacon John True**

**Steve and Marge Harman**

**Donald Trump**

**Anne Konen**

**Michaelle Vega-Hernandez**

**Linda Mullins**

**Rev. Michael Voithofer**

**Dave and Joanne Kolenda**

**Matt Ware Family**

**Mark Ware**

**Clarence L. Werner**

**Gary and Becky Werner**

**Don Westling & Jo Bartikoski**

**Kathleen Bradley**

**Roni Wilder**

**Mindy Morrisaey**

**Loretta Williams**

**Michaela Neary**

**Mrs. Robert H. Williams**

**Steve Urban and Jo Williams**

**MaryAnne Zakzewski**

**Studio “B” Photography**


Did You Know?

- Did you know that the Siena/Francis House is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt, charitable organization, and that your gift to our shelter is tax deductible, to the full extent of the law? The Siena/Francis House’s federal tax identification number is 47-0601005.
- Did you know that many businesses and companies match financial gifts given to the Siena/Francis House by its employees? Help make your gift go further by inquiring about whether the organization for which you or your spouse works has a Matching Gift Program.
- Did you know that the Siena/Francis House can accept gifts of securities, such as stocks and mutual funds? You can easily transfer appreciated stocks or mutual fund shares you have owned for more than one year to our organization. After the transfer, we will sell the securities and use the proceeds in support of our programs that serve the homeless. You will receive an immediate income tax deduction for the fair market value of the securities on the date of their transfer, regardless of what you originally paid for them. You will pay no capital gains tax on the shares you transfer when we sell the securities. Gifts of appreciated securities and mutual funds are deductible up to 30% of your adjusted gross income the year you make the gift.

Important: It is important that you contact us, prior to the transfer, so that we can assist you with instructions for your broker. This will also help our staff to identify your gift when it is received, and to acknowledge and thank you for it in a timely manner. Please contact Siena/Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully, at tsully@sienafrancis.org, or at 402-341-1821 to initiate a gift of stocks or mutual funds to the Siena/Francis House. Also, if you wish to ensure that your gift of securities to the Siena/Francis House happens in calendar year 2017, please contact your brokerage account manager right away, in order to inquire the date by which you need to initiate a transfer.
- Did you know that companies, businesses, and other employers can support the mission of the Siena/Francis House by sponsoring a periodic Casual Dress Day or Jeans Day? Ask your employer about selecting a day when employees can dress casually— for a small fee (usually between $2 and $5)— with the proceeds going to the Siena/Francis House. Boost morale at work while supporting a good cause by “dressing down” for a day.
- Did you know that you may include the Siena/Francis House as a beneficiary in your estate planning? Please take a moment to review the “Estate Planning” item later in this newsletter. Did you know that you can make an online donation to Siena/Francis House? Please visit our website at www.sienafrancis.org to make a secure, online donation. You can also make your gift a recurring one through the same website. Please contact Dawn Olijnek (dawn@sienafrancis.org) or Kristi Miskimins (kmiskimins@sienafrancis.org) or Tim Sully (tsully@sienafrancis.org) – or by phone at 402-341-1821 – for information regarding online donation opportunities.

Estate Planning

You have the ability to make a lasting gift to support the homeless of your very own community by including the Siena/Francis House in your estate, as a beneficiary of a life insurance policy, or as a beneficiary of a retirement account. Please consider a planned gift to the Siena/Francis House. If you already have a will, you can include the Siena/Francis House as a beneficiary through the use of a short, separate document called a codicil. If you have not yet finalized your will, please consider including the Siena/Francis House in your estate plans. Our legal name is “Siena/Francis House” and our federal tax identification number is 47-0601005.

As you consider a planned gift to our shelter, please know that you can designate the gift in honor of, or in tribute to an individual or family member. These types of “legacy” gifts will go a long way in helping our organization provide food, shelter, and clothing services that so many in our community desperately need. Planned gifts that we have received in the past have been extremely important to furthering our mission of serving the poorest of the poor, right here in our local community.

Please contact Siena/Francis House Development Director, Tim Sully, at 402-341-1821 or at tsully@sienafrancis.org, or consult your estate planner or tax attorney for more information about how to make such an important gift in support of those in our community who are most in need.
VOLUNTEERS CREATE PLACES TO GROW

Like most summers at Siena/Francis House, our volunteers have been busy improving the look and productivity of our outdoor spaces.

Boy Scout Dylan Withiers from Troop #565 orchestrated the building, delivery and planting of eight planter boxes to make the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter more aesthetically pleasing. In doing so, Dylan earned his Eagle Scout award, and Siena/Francis House benefitted from beautiful flowers and plants all summer long.

Another Boy Scout, Skylar Alexander, built and planted raised garden boxes for residents of our permanent supportive housing apartments, related to him earning his Eagle Scout rank. Rhubarb, herbs and flowers are ready for the picking!

More growth took place in a newly-planted community garden, provided by an organization called VetHelp1. Volunteers from this group used produce from this garden when they prepared meals for the homeless on our campus this summer.

Finally, our youngest homeless guests benefited from a renovation of the fenced grassy area adjacent to the Siena House with direction from Nature Explore! outdoor classroom representatives. A partnership with Lund-Ross and other volunteers provided equipment, materials and labor to create a kid-friendly outdoor space, complete with plants, sand exploration, playground equipment and outdoor musical instruments.

A big thank you goes out to all of these volunteers and organizations for creating these amazing outdoor projects!

BIKE MAINTENANCE STATION KEEPS GUESTS ROLLING ALONG

It may not be surprising that a common mode of transportation for people who find themselves in need of our services is a bicycle. Siena/Francis House requests and receives donations of bicycles which we convey to our homeless guests, free of charge. However, the ability to properly fix and maintain one’s bicycle has long been a challenge for people staying at our shelter.

This past spring, the Papio Natural Resources District and Eastern Nebraska Trails Network provided a permanent bike maintenance station on the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter campus.

This bike maintenance station includes an air pump, bike repair rack, and a number of tools, including screw drivers and wrenches. It is one of several such stations around the metro area, although the first located at a homeless shelter. And it’s very popular - the maintenance station sees daily use by our homeless shelter guests.

According to Siena/Francis House Maintenance Manager Kyle Templeton, the bike station is a very welcome addition. While the shelter’s maintenance staff has been happy helping guests fix their bikes, this new maintenance station offers guests access to tools needed to fix their bikes themselves. Our guests can feel a sense of pride in their fix-it skills, and our maintenance staff can now more easily focus on the myriad maintenance tasks required of them on our campus.

Siena/Francis House is grateful to the Papio Natural Resources District and Eastern Nebraska Trails Network for this unique gift.

DO YOU HAVE A USED, USABLE BICYCLE?

Many Siena/Francis House guests utilize bicycles as a means of transportation. Do you have a used men’s or women’s bicycle – in good, working condition – that you don’t know what to do with? Please consider donating it to the Siena/Francis House! Your bicycle donation can make an enormous difference to a guest of our shelter who is trying to find or keep a job, or who is going to school.

Used bicycles – in good, working condition – can be dropped off at our loading dock, Siena/Francis House Baright Shelter, located at 1111 North 17th Street. You will be given a receipt for your donation at the time you drop off your bicycle, your donation is also tax deductible.

Thank you for considering donating your bicycle to the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter!
Creighton University’s “Empty Bowls” Project Benefits Siena/Francis House

If you enjoy fine art and great soup, please plan to attend Creighton University’s “Empty Bowls Project,” a fundraiser for the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter. When you purchase a beautiful, handmade ceramic bowl (most in the $5-$10 range), you will also receive a complimentary bowl of soup to enjoy, generously donated by the University’s Sodexo Catering, with bread from Rotella’s Bakery. And, you’ll also be supporting a good cause. Creighton University ceramics students, faculty, staff, and many other volunteers are creating one-of-a-kind pieces of pottery for this unique project. All proceeds from the event will be donated to the Siena/Francis House.

The 2017 “Empty Bowls Project” will be held from 4-8p.m. on Wednesday, December 6 and from 11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. on Thursday, December 7 in the Lied Education Center for the Arts, located on the northeast corner of 24th & Cass Street on the Creighton University campus.

Creighton’s “Empty Bowls Project” is part of a national program of the same name, originated in 1990 at a high school in Michigan. The premise was simple: Make some bowls, sell them to the faculty and staff, and raise money for a local food drive. Since then, Empty Bowls has sparked community action across the globe, raising millions of dollars for hunger relief, worldwide.

The 2017 version of Creighton’s “Empty Bowls Project” is the sixth time Creighton Associate Professor of Ceramics in the Department of Fine & Performing Arts, Amy Nelson, has organized the event. And, since 2008, this project has raised nearly $30,000 for the Siena/Francis House. As Amy states, “The level of student commitment to the project has been astounding. It still amazes me how effortlessly and enthusiastically CU students dedicate their time and creative energy to something they are giving away. I believe that much of this dedication comes from the fact students have already contributed to the Siena/Francis House’s mission in other ways.”

The Siena/Francis House is honored to have a strong community partnership with Creighton University’s Fine & Performing Arts Department, as well as to be the recipient of funds raised from the University’s “Empty Bowls Project.”

For more information about the Empty Bowls Project, please contact Amy Nelson at 402-280-2510 or at AmyNelson@creighton.edu.

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2017 ANNUAL WALK/RUN

The Siena/Francis House held our 23rd Annual Walk/Run at Stinson Park in Aksarben Village on Saturday, September 9, 2017. Well over 300 runners and walkers participated in one of two events: the 5K Run and the 5K Walk. The weather was beautiful, and both events went off without a hitch. We would like to thank all of the Walk/Run participants for turning out this year. We would also like to express our sincere gratitude to the caring corporate sponsors of this year’s event, including: Wells Fargo; Kiewit Companies; First Data; Baxter Toyota of La Vista; Bank of the West; Tenaska, Inc; EMCommunity; Fuhrman, Smolsky & Furey; American National Bank; Merrill Lynch (Ambrose Lighthart Group); US Bank; Village Pointe Pediatrics; Frankel Zacharia; Eyeoptics (Dr. Joe Townley); Alley Poyner Macchietto Architecture; Pediatric Ophthalmology Association (Sebastian Troia); Werner Enterprises; Sirius Computer Solutions; Optiv; OneNeck; Cisco; Miller Electric; TSYS Merchant Solutions; Security National Bank; VMware, Inc.; CenturyLink; Valmont Industries; Abe’s Trash Service and HDR.

All proceeds from the Walk/Run go directly to help the Siena/Francis House provide emergency overnight shelter and food to Omaha’s homeless men, women, and children.
Christmas at the Siena/Francis House Homeless Shelter

The Siena/Francis House has much to be thankful for this year. And, at the top of our gratitude list are our wonderful donors and volunteers who have been so generous in supporting our mission of serving the nearly 4,000 homeless men, women and children who sought assistance this past year.

As Christmas Day approaches, the Siena/Francis House is asking for your assistance in helping make it a truly special one for the hundreds of homeless children and adults who will wake up in our shelter that morning....and for their family members. Will you please consider purchasing an extra Christmas item or items to donate to the Siena/Francis House? These items will become presents for our homeless guests and their family members this Christmas season.

Please know that it will take the combined effort of many, many individuals, organizations, schools, businesses, and families in order to bring smiles, cheer, and Christmas gifts to over 1,400 children, women and men during the Christmas Season.

Below are some helpful hints for you regarding this request for donated Christmas gifts:

• Below is a list of Christmas gift ideas and suggestions for all age groups. We also welcome gift certificates to various retail stores, which we provide to those “hard-to-buy-for” teens and young adults.
• We ask that all gifts be unwrapped when you deliver them.
• Please deliver your gifts to the loading dock of our Baright Shelter, located at 1111 North 17th Street. The dock is open from 8 am until 5 pm every day. You will be given a receipt for your donation at the time you deliver your gift(s).
• We would appreciate it if all gifts could be delivered to the Siena/Francis House’s loading dock by no later than Sunday, December 10, 2017.
• Please email or call Siena/Francis House staff member, Beth Haig, if you would like an update of the “most needed” items, or for further information. Beth can be reached at bhaig@sienafrancis.org or via her cell phone at 402-677-3085.

Thank you for considering this request....and Merry Christmas from our house to yours!

NEWBORNS
blankets or quilts, sleepers and onesies (size newborn to 24 months), basic clothing, socks, teething toys, interactive toys

BOYS: Toddler - Grade School
action figures, cars and trucks, footballs, soccer balls, basketballs, baseballs and gloves, models, magnets, games and puzzles, coloring and activity books, markers and crayons, craft and activity sets, trading cards, books
(No toy guns, knives or swords, please!)

GIRLS: Toddler - Grade School
dolls, clothing and accessories, jewelry, play makeup, hair accessories, stuffed animals, art, craft and activity sets, coloring and activity books, markers and crayons, games and puzzles, books

JR. HIGH - HIGH SCHOOL
MP3 players, iPods, watches and jewelry, makeup, cologne and perfume, wallets and billfolds, hooded sweatshirts, fleeces and flannels (sizes small to 5X), MP3 players, iPods, flat irons and blow dryers, books

ADULT MEN & WOMEN
watches and jewelry, wallets and billfolds, manicure sets and nail clippers, cologne and perfume, hooded sweatshirts, fleeces and flannels (sizes small to 5X), MP3 players, iPods, flat irons and blow dryers, books

GIFT IDEAS FOR ALL AGES
Socks, underwear, long johns, gloves and hats, backpacks and sports bags, lip balm, batteries (AA, AAA, D, 9 Volt)

Another terrific gift option is to donate gift certificate(s) to retail stores, such as: Department Stores; Discount Stores; Specialty Clothing or Shoe Stores; Athletics Stores; Restaurants; and Book and Music Stores.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR CONSIDERING PURCHASING CHRISTMAS GIFTS AND/OR GIFT CERTIFICATES FOR OUR HOMELESS GUESTS AND THEIR FAMILIES THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!
Siena/Francis House
Homeless Shelter
1702 Nicholas Street Omaha NE 68102
PO Box 217-DTS Omaha NE 68101
Phone: (402) 341-1821
Fax: (402) 341-5270
www.sienafrancis.org

Address Service Requested

WILL YOU PLEASE HELP STOCK OUR SHELVES? WE NEED:

PERSONAL HYGIENE
- deodorant
- shampoo, conditioner
- bath soap
- disposable razors
- shaving cream
- shower gel
- hand & body lotion
- lip balms
- toothbrushes/toothpaste
- combs & brushes
- foot powder
- perfume
- men’s cologne
- adhesive bandages
- antiseptic cream
- antacids
- pain relievers
- Q-Tips

PAPER/PLASTIC
- toilet paper
- feminine hygiene products
- tissues
- napkins
- paper towels
- trash can liners (13 & 55 gallon)
- aluminum foil
- plastic wrap
- 8 oz. styrofoam cups
- paper plates
- sandwich bags
- brown paper lunch bags
- rubber gloves

KITCHEN
- silverware
- cooking/serving utensils
- dinner plates, bowls
- coffee cups
- sheet pans – commercial size

LINENS
- bath towels
- wash cloths
- sheets (for twin/single beds, only)
- blankets (for twin/single beds, only)
- pillows/pillow cases

BABY ITEMS
- disposable diapers
- bottles
- formula
- baby food
- bibs
- diaper bags
- t-shirts
- sleepers
- socks
- powder
- baby oil & lotion

CLEANING PRODUCTS
- dish soap
- laundry soap (powdered)
- liquid bleach
- liquid disinfectant (e.g. Pine Sol)
- oven cleaner
- powdered cleaners/cleansers
- brooms & dustpans
- sink & tub disinfectant cleaner
- mops, buckets, squeegees

CLOTHING (FOR MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN OF ALL AGES)
- coats
- sweatsuits
- hoodies
- jackets
- pants
- shorts
- shirts
- tops/blouses
- underwear & other undergarments
- long johns
- socks
- shoes
- boots
- gloves

FOOD
- canned fruits & vegetable (larger, #10 cans preferred)
- frozen meat (professionally-processed)
- lunch “déli” meats (for sack lunches)
- chips/treats (for sack lunches)
- bottled water

MISCELLANEOUS
- MAT bus ticket books
- batteries (AA, AAA, C, D, 9-volt)
- masking tape
- pens, pencils, markers, crayons
- spiral notebooks
- folders (for schoolwork)
- 3-ring binders
- copier paper
- maintenance tools
- backpacks
- duffel bags

All in-kind donations can be delivered to our loading dock, located at 1111 North 17th Street, open from 8 a.m. until 5 p.m. every day of the year.