



St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin County  
P.O. Box 150527  
San Rafael, CA 94915

**PENNIES FROM HEAVEN** is the Society's annual fund raising gala, which will take place **Saturday, September 12 at 6pm at St. Hilary Church in Tiburon.** Help us prevent homelessness and serve those in need by supporting this event! For tickets or more information, please call Suzanne Walker at 415-454-3303 ext. 17.

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Our donors listed contributed \$1,000 or more to the St. Vincent de Paul Society of Marin, between 8/7/14 and 8/7/15. Gifts to individual conferences are not included.



# SPEAKING UP



## Leadership Campaign Kicks-off With Success!

Bill was a single dad raising his autistic son, David, on his own. During the recession his business failed which left him in a very difficult situation. While he found new work and a steady paycheck, his income was reduced, and he was behind on his bills. Bill had a kind landlord who allowed the family to stay even though they were behind on their rent, but after a year without catching up, eviction was imminent.

Bill's landlord called the Society to ask for help — he knew that he had to evict his tenant, but felt terrible about putting an autistic child on the street. With the referral from the landlord, our team stepped in to prevent a crisis.

With your help, dad and son received our immediate intervention and financial support to start over.

Bill and David were fortunate to be one of the first families to benefit from the 2015 Leadership Giving Campaign. The Society launched the Leadership Giving Campaign so that we can do more to help struggling families. To date, we've raised more than \$190,000 to ensure that children like David

We were able to pay first and last month's rent and security deposit on a new apartment. Best of all, it is in Novato, where David was admitted to a high school music program for his freshman year this fall.

Because of your generosity, this teen never had to experience the trauma of losing his home, and his father is eternally grateful for your assistance. Bill cried on the day we gave him the check for his deposit. But that's not the end of the story. Bill continues to meet regularly with our case manager to learn proven techniques to balance his budget and control his finances. With your help, we continue to provide support services to Bill's family so that they can be self-sufficient and thrive once again.

do not end up homeless. If you would like to be part of the Leadership Giving Campaign which saves families in crisis, please contact Christine Paquette at [cpaquette@vinnies.org](mailto:cpaquette@vinnies.org).



Right now, our freezer in the Free Dining Room is only ¼ full with the meat we need.



Can you help us by donating meat or sending a gift in the enclosed envelope? Please help us fill our freezer so we can keep up with the demand...an astounding 600 meals per day for our hungry seniors, veterans, children and many others.

Are you able to pick up something to help the Free Dining Room? We always need:

- Milk
- Cheese (cheddar, jack, mozzarella, parmesan)
- Canola oil
- Dried black beans
- Frozen ground beef
- Canned tuna
- Paper towels
- White or brown rice
- Whole turkeys

## VOLUNTEERS TO THE RESCUE

How do we turn volunteers into educators?



Did you know that 54% of our REST shelter volunteers went on to attend public meetings to advocate for improving homeless services in Marin?\*

The Society's volunteer model means that ordinary people like you are not only feeding the homeless but sitting down and eating dinner with them. Our volunteers listen and learn.

Our volunteers say that these experiences inspire them to speak up, do more, and make a difference for those who are living on our streets.

\*A recent Marin County Health & Human Services poll stated that the Society's "REST model plays a significant role in shifting people's perceptions about people who are homeless and the issues surrounding homelessness."



## Marcy was 59 and suffering from the long-term effects of homelessness.

She seemed old beyond her years, experienced pain and depression, and couldn't walk far without stopping to rest.

When Marcy came to the Society for help, she quickly made an impression as a pleasant and helpful person who liked to help others, even when she was desperately in need of help herself. We took her into our Rotating Emergency Shelter Team (REST) but as the shelter season came to a close, we worried that Marcy might not survive if she had to go back to living on the streets.

Thanks to you, the St. Vincent de Paul Society offers eight studio apartments in our building to people who are homeless. With grace on our side, a vacancy came up and we knew that it was meant for Marcy.

Finally, the day came when we helped Marcy move into her beautiful studio apartment. Society volunteers provided furniture and household goods to help her feel at home. Today, Marcy is healthier and happier. She tells us that having her own apartment is like being in heaven. And, on the strength of her smile, you would believe her.

At the Society, an important part of helping each person is to connect them with critical services so that they can address their barriers to housing. We worked as a team with the County of Marin, San Rafael Police Department, and other social service providers to help keep up Marcy's spirits and the wheels of progress moving toward permanent housing.



Ken had worked in the construction industry for years. Because work was sporadic and often paid under the table, he ended up losing his

apartment and sleeping in his truck. When Ken came to the Society's Housing Help Desk, he was looking for help to keep his truck registered. But our Help Desk volunteer wanted to do more to help Ken. Our volunteer talked with Ken about joining a Carpenter's Union, and made all the calls to connect him with the right people. Thanks to those calls, a whole new world opened to Ken. He joined the union, and because you want to help people become self-sufficient, the Society even paid the first installment of his union dues. Thanks to you, Ken is working and supporting himself again in a much more sustainable way.



James was only 22 and living under Highway 101. He didn't have anyone in his life to help him. When we met James, we knew immediately that we had to help. Thanks to you, the Society

can often provide a foundation for lost souls like James to rebuild their lives.

We brought James into our Housing group at the REST shelter and helped him set attainable goals. He was motivated to change his circumstances. James was using his smart phone to teach himself about computer programming. Your support allowed us to purchase a recycled laptop so that he could have the tools to pursue his dream of becoming a computer programmer.

Today, James is working part-time at a local retail store and excited about the prospect of taking his first round of computer certification tests. Because you care, James has a real plan for a better future.



Christine Paquette, Executive Director

Recently, I was compiling a report for our Board and came across a statistic that amazed me. Here at the Society, one important measurement of "success" for our Council is the amount of emergency aid we distribute each year to Marin residents who are in crisis.

Since 1946, our local St. Vincent de Paul "conferences" have distributed millions of dollars in emergency rent and utility assistance in our Home Visits programs. This is quite a feat!

But only in recent years has our Marin headquarters entered into the act, raising additional funds to help prevent homelessness, re-house homeless residents, provide emergency dental care, and so much more. How have we progressed? In 1999, our District Council gave away \$161 in these efforts, separate from our Home Visits and Help Desk funds. How much did we give away this year? We will give away \$438,681 in direct aid, in addition to the \$350,000 distributed by our conferences! This tremendous success is due to the dedication of our loyal donors, our skilled board members, and our steadfast volunteers. All of these supporters have united together to passionately and persistently fight poverty and its effects in our community. Today, 59 years after our inception, we are stronger than ever and have launched our Leadership Giving Campaign, which will safely house 152 more people in crisis. For only \$2,500 per family on average, you can get a homeless family off of our streets. For more information on how you can join this campaign, please contact me at 415-454-3303 ext. 12 or email cpaquette@vinnies.org.

Each day at the Society, our objective is to find triumph in the face of desperation. Today, we celebrate you, and thousands like you, who are doing more than ever to bring health and safety to those who have nowhere else to turn.

The Society has been transformed, thanks to all of you.