

# shelterworks

News from the Willis Dady Emergency Shelter

Summer  
2011

## Success Story

Dusty's Corner



The first time I met Randy was February 2009. He was a charming 73 year old veteran with a positive attitude and excellent sense of humor. While in the shelter, Randy would frequently joke with staff and clients and seemed to have a gentle way that helped everyone feel a little more at ease. Knowing Randy had served in our armed service, staff quickly contacted the Veteran Affairs Department and together we were able to discover some of the deeper issues causing his homelessness.

With help from the VA, we discovered that Randy was receiving over \$1,000 dollars per month in disability and Veterans Affairs pension. When questioned about where his money went staff was shocked at his response. Randy was a compulsive hoarder and was currently paying rent on twelve storage units which consumed the majority of his resources. We asked Randy if he would be willing to get rid of even one storage unit and he became very uncomfortable at the thought. Hoarders form deep emotional connections with their belongings even if they are hazardous or are functionally worthless. Over the next several weeks Randy continued to refuse to give up his belongings and disappeared. Because of his age and the fact that we knew he would now be sleeping outside, staff was extremely concerned. We would not hear from Randy again for nearly 2 years.

On a sunny day in May, I received a phone call from the Mission of Hope Shelter and they asked me if I had seen a client they had sent to us 2 days ago. I told them I hadn't seen anyone and asked what his name was. It was Randy. Now two years older, I knew he must be nearby and went looking for him. After driving down countless alleys and circling blocks, I noticed a man sleeping in the lawn of a local bank. When I got out and speak to him I immediately recognized the charming old man from years ago. Randy didn't know where he was, where he slept the night before, what his name was or what year it was. It was clear by his appearance that he had been sleeping outside for a long time. I brought him back to the shelter, got him cleaned up and sat down to have a conversation with him.

Randy admitted that it was time to get rid of some of his storage units. We are working with the VA to get him placed in assisted living and the outlook is positive. We now have appointments for Randy to see a physician on a regular basis, a service he has not used for many years. He is meeting with mental health professionals to help him with his memory problems and it seems to improve every day. With any luck, we will have Randy in his own apartment in a matter of weeks and he will never have to sleep outside again.

-Dusty

## Willis Dady Emergency Shelter Board of Directors

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# Director's Notes

The times, they are a changin'. Federal policy is shifting toward a more coordinated effort to address homelessness. Generally known as the HEARTH Act, the policies and goals began to take shape in the last decade, though details of 2012 funding are still being developed. And in these times of program cuts and tight budgets, major funding for homelessness is even expanding! This is truly a paradigm shift for all, including shelters like Willis Dady. More than ever, we need to focus on our role as part of a system that includes a wide array of services to meet the needs of the homeless and those at risk of becoming homeless. The policy changes described in the Spring 2011 issue of shelterworks align very well with the new model. So does our forthcoming reinstatement of STRAP, our rental assistance program.

Looking forward, our community will be evaluated on some fairly simple criteria. Our goal will be to keep people from becoming homeless (prevention), to have shorter shelter stays for those who do enter shelter (30 days or less), to have fewer people return to shelter (recidivism) and to improve overall performance in addressing homelessness. Federal funding will be available to support these efforts and the amount of funding will depend on how we perform as a state.

Shelters are regarded as necessary but have a much smaller role in the new system. The balance of emphasis – and resources – must shift from address-

ing basic needs to helping those at risk of becoming homeless to avoid shelter and helping those who end up in the shelter get into permanent housing as soon as possible. Both will need case management after they enter into assistance with Willis Dady. This means someone who works with them on setting goals, accessing resources, staying on track and holding them accountable for becoming self-sufficient. Case managers are trained professionals and cost money. As of now, Dusty Noble is our only case manager, but we will be adding another position.”

In order to be successful in both maintaining a shelter and providing support to help clients achieve self-sufficiency, we will need a “shift” in thinking among our supporters as well. Although we will certainly continue to need donations of paper goods, soap, linens, and other essentials, we also need additional financial support. We’ll leave it up to individuals, families, groups and congregations to determine the best “mix” of supplies and monetary donations. However, we can provide some guidance if that would be helpful. Especially keep in mind that summer is typically a low ebb for monetary donations so whatever you choose to give will be especially helpful at this time. These are exciting times and with your help, we’ll continue to make a difference in the lives of those we serve.

*Thanks and have a wonderful summer.*

**Tim**

To learn more about the HEARTH Act and its implications, visit: <http://www.slideshare.net/naehomelessness/17-norm-suchar>. To learn more about homelessness in the U.S. and strategies that are effective in addressing homelessness, visit: <http://www.endhomelessness.org/>

# Give to wdes

# Thank YOU

## How Can I Help?

### Make a Charitable Contribution

The Willis Dady Emergency Shelter is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization. Please see below to find out how you can make a charitable contribution for a great cause.

### Our Sunday Table Program

Willis Dady is looking for groups to prepare a Sunday lunch for approximately 30 people and deliver it to the shelter; we provide tableware and the mouths to feed. Clients and staff enjoy the meal and conversation. All help clean up.

### Become a Driver for Willis Dady

From time to time, we could make use of volunteers with vehicles who can run errands; sometimes planned and sometimes on short notice. Please call Dusty Noble for details at 362-7555, ext. 1.

### Donate Items to Stuff, Etc.

WDES has made arrangements with Stuff, Etc. to accept items on behalf of the shelter and the money will be applied to our account. Please use the appropriate account number when dropping off: C.R. West use: 18895, C.R. East use: 13519

## Financial Contribution

### Online

1. Go to <http://willisdady.org/>
2. Click on "How to Help"
3. Click on the box near the bottom labeled "Donate Now through Network for Good"
4. Enter your donation and credit card number

### U.S. Mail

1. Return the envelope included in this mailing with your contribution

## Special Thanks to some of Our Recent Donors

Ascension Lutheran Church  
St Andrew Lutheran Church  
Buffalo United Methodist church  
Cedar Christian Church  
Concordia Lutheran Church  
St. Jude Church  
St. Pius Catholic Church  
Bradley and Riley PC  
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Washington High School ADAstra Blood Drive  
Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation  
- Vern W Reeder Memorial Fund  
- Steven & Joanne Carfrae Fund  
International Paper -- Cedar River Mill  
Daybreak Rotary of Cedar Rapids

*Thank you to all our friends, family, and organizations who have contributed in the past. Your continued support has led Willis Dady through tough economic times. Your current support will allow us to keep moving forward!*



WDES is proud to be a Partner Agency of the United Way of East Central Iowa



## Willis Dady Emergency Shelter, Inc.

1247 4th Ave SE  
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403

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# Partner Agency

## Services for Veterans

We are very fortunate to have not one but two key partners who work with Willis Dady staff to serve homeless veterans. These are the Linn County Veterans Affairs Office and the Iowa City VA Health Care System's Health Care for Homeless Veterans (HCHV) program. The former provides a host of services to qualifying veterans in need, including help with paying rent and utilities (up to \$100). The HCHV program targets homeless veterans, connecting them with medical, dental, and mental health care, as well as referrals for employment opportunities, residential substance abuse treatment, and other basic needs.

It is unfortunate that many who have sacrificed much in the service of our country eventually find themselves homeless. At least those homeless veterans in our area have capable allies and a place to go where they can call "home" until they can get back on their feet. We work closely with VA staff to help veterans understand and coordinate resources to minimize the time they need shelter.

Our liaison at the county level is Don Tyne, Director of the VA office (319 892-5160). Our local HCHV Outreach Social Worker is Susan Stannard (319 430-5230).



*Susan Stannard & Don Tyne*