

# THE FRIENDSHIP TIMES

Newsletter of Friendship House, Mount Vernon, WA



## Thank God for Friendship House!

Marie Marchand, Executive Director



**T**hank God for Friendship House! I hear this refrain often on my travels throughout the community. I hear it from volunteers, donors, clergy, elected officials, and business owners. I am happy when I hear it from the Friendship House staff and our residents. It is my own internal affirmation when leaving work each day. It is usually followed by: "If it weren't for Friendship House..." The way that sentence ends is often profoundly sad and, in a way, bittersweet. "If it weren't for Friendship House...that sad 12 year-old boy wouldn't have had a warm Christmas dinner." "...that little girl would have gone another day without shoes." "...Mr. Smith probably would have frozen to death near the river." Homelessness robs people of their dignity; Friendship House restores it.

For most citizens of Skagit Valley, it is hard to imagine this depth of poverty right here at home. At Friendship House, no one sleeps on the floor because our goal is to lift people up, to help restore their dignity. We believe in people when no one else will. Do they let us down sometimes? Absolutely! Do we give up? No. We try to remember that even the people who relapse, or leave before they get into housing, had a temporary period of respite when they knew that someone cared about them. It's certainly not "easy street" living at Friendship House; we enforce strict rules. Yet, simultaneously, we practice 'agape love': love for the whole of humankind. Agape love is the belief in people's capacity to change and be redeemed. It's hard to believe in yourself when no one else does.

***We walk alongside people; we don't carry them.***

Recently a resident went to the hospital. When filling out his paperwork at the registration desk, he put as his Emergency Contact the name of a Friendship House staff member.

This is heartbreaking. It shows the depth of his loneliness. It also shows how much he felt valued at Friendship House. Profound and bittersweet.

It is on such days that our staff members realize the deep meaning of their presence, and the importance of their heartfelt contributions. 'For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.'

Friendship House is the emergency contact for people who would otherwise be cold and alone. We walk alongside broken-hearted people hoping to revitalize their belief in themselves and in life. We walk alongside them, we don't carry them. At the end of each day, we all whisper to ourselves, "Thank God for Friendship House." ♥

*Photo: Marie with Board Members Michael & Susan Custance*

**INSIDE:**

- Message from the Board President
- Finance Report from the Treasurer
- En Vogue Runway Show & Auction
- Thanks to the Community!

- Resident Success: Susan & Warren
- Staff Spotlight: Yvonne Bennett
- Volunteer Spotlight: Vicki Aslett
- From Hunger to Hope



Tina (right) with former board member and Friendship House co-founder Buzzy Marsh

# My Inaugural Year as Board President

*Tina Tate, Board President*

2011 was my first year as President of Friendship House. We made some very significant strides including developing a three-year Strategic Plan. The Board approved this document in April and by September, we had already accomplished 70% of our goals. Among those was the opening of a second transitional house in August. Friendship House has become much more stable in the past couple of years than it had been in recent history. Our Board of Directors and Executive Director are doing a great job leading Friendship House to a brighter future.

I am honored to have been elected to be President of the Board for another year. I'd like to welcome new board members: Pastor Josh Kelley, County Commissioner Sharon Dillon, and WWU Student and Iraq Veteran Stephanie Morgareidge. I'd like to recognize and thank the amazing Susan Cooper who completed her board terms in December. Her contributions to the organization were outstanding. In closing, I look forward to 2012 being a year that will have us looking into a financially strong future that enables us to fulfill our vital mission of serving those in need. It will be exciting to start slowly expanding our services to meet a growing community need. ♥

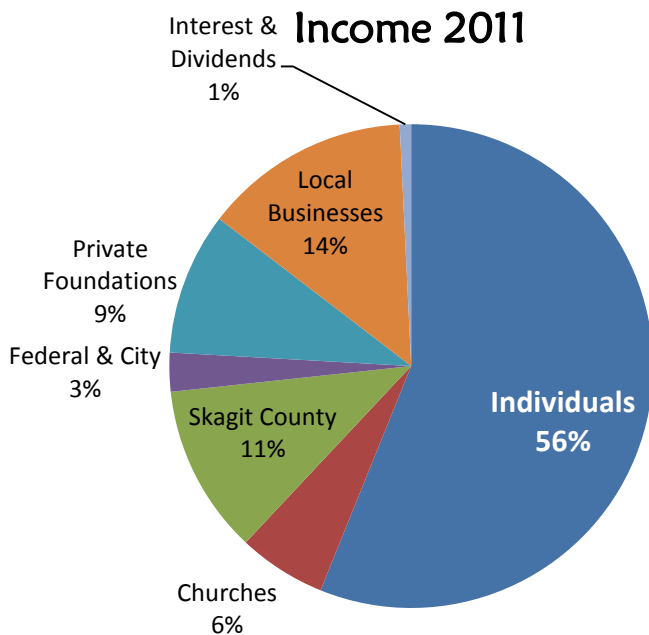
## Money Matters: 2011 a Success!

*Dennis Taylor, Board Treasurer*

Not many people realize that it costs almost \$30,000 a month to operate Friendship House. Thankfully, we continue to be the beneficiary of this community's generosity. In 2011, Friendship House continued its trek towards financial stability and sustainability with benchmark successes and positive results. Common indicators of financial health for nonprofits include: 1) number of new donors; 2) ratio of program and administrative costs; 3) percent of independent funding sources; 4) diversity of income streams. We have a great scorecard on these fronts. In early-2011, we were in a good position to undertake a few costly and long-overdue capital improvements to ensure our clients' safety; these costs are reflected in our year-end variance.



Finance Team: Tom Rose (left) & Treasurer Dennis Taylor with Marie Marchand



First, 2011 saw an increase in new donors. In November and December alone, we welcomed over 80 new donors. Second, our completed 2010 audit reported that **69%** of our revenue goes directly into programming for the people we serve! Nonprofit "watchdog" groups encourage organizations to shoot for 65% or higher. Third, as indicated in the pie chart, we received 86% of our funding in 2011 from non-governmental sources. While we value government support (and are especially proud of our partnership with Skagit County) we also value our autonomy. Maintaining the integrity of our mission is utmost. Community support is integral to making this possible. Lastly, we are not overly reliant on one particular income stream. As you'll see on the next page, even our grant sources are varied. In 2011, we developed a three-year strategic fundraising plan. Our Executive Director is a seasoned fundraiser, and our finance and development committee members are active and engaged. In October, we welcomed a new Development Associate. A strong financial foundation allows us to live out our mission through excellent programming. ♥

**TOTAL INCOME: \$361,679\***

**TOTAL EXPENSES: \$377,127**

*\*does not include \$34,000 Boeing capital grant*

Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank You Thank

The generosity of families, businesses, and churches is astounding, especially during the holidays. While there is not enough space to thank everyone who has made a recent donation, we'd like to feature a few people and businesses that pursued creative projects to help. Thanks to ALL who have given to us!



Shannon Smick & Arlington DSHS • Elena Roppel & Homeplace Burlington • Students Justin Frederick, Brady Grieve & Calvin Rutherford • Jennie Joplin • Dr. Eberhardt • Toni, Joe & New Song Church • Susan Duffy • Skagit County EMTs • Joe Belleme & Sleep Masters • Skagit Valley Gardens • Vintage Stitchers • Tammany Whitlock • Pat Hammond • Linda Taylor • The Drain Doctor • Advanced Pest Control • Special monetary support from Norm Nelson, Inc. • Soroptimists of Anacortes • Hampton Lumber



**Recent Foundation Grants:**

- Boeing Employees Community Fund: **\$34,000** for bathrooms
- Medina Foundation: **\$15,000** for homeless services
- Sedro-Woolley Soroptimists: **\$2,500** for Wellness Fund
- Tulalip Tribe: **\$7,000** for homeless services
- Skagit County: **\$70,000** for homeless services in 2012
- Episcopal Charities: **\$2,000** for homeless services
- Seattle Foundation: **\$10,000** to develop a mentorship & training center



**EN VOGUE** **Runway Show & Auction**  
**Thursday, March 1, 2012**  
**McIntyre Hall Grand Lobby**

On March 1, Friendship House and tulees eco-fashions will host **En Vogue Runway Show and Fundraising Auction**. Thanks to our generous event sponsors, 100% of the evening's donations will go straight to the people served by Friendship House. Local designers will unveil their creations that have been "re-purposed" from clothing found in Friendship House's emergency donation room. The outfits will be modeled and auctioned off at the event. There will also be a silent auction.

The owner of tulees, Katie Senff, helped make last year's inaugural Fashion Show wildly successful in raising \$7,000 for the homeless program. This year, the goal is to raise \$10,000. "What I love about this fundraising auction is its uniqueness," shared Marie Marchand, Executive Director of Friendship House. "Talented local designers create fashionable outfits from various and sundry items found in our emergency donation room. It's a fun way for people to support their neighbors who are earnestly striving to get back on their feet."

Join Kristen Keltz of the Mount Vernon Chamber as Mistress of Ceremonies and nationally-known auctioneer Tom Pasma for an evening of upscale fashion complete with a chic runway, music, and lights. Tickets for the Avant Garde VIP Reception are \$50 and include hors d'oeuvres and beverages. General Admission is \$25. The runway show starts at 7:00pm, doors open at 6:30pm. Tickets are available at McIntyre Hall Box Office, by phone at 360.416.7727, and online at [www.mcintyrehall.org](http://www.mcintyrehall.org). **Thanks to our event sponsors:**



# “You are the light of the world.”

Susan, Former Resident

DEAR FRIENDSHIP STAFF AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS,

My name is Susan and this is my success story, and I owe it to the Friendship House and Yvonne Bennett. Two and a half years ago I left a very dangerous and violent marriage where I was sure I was going to die. With nothing to my name and just a few belongings, I ended up in a couple of Domestic Violence shelters that weren't even that safe. That is where I learned about the Friendship House and then met Yvonne Bennett who would truly become my mentor in so many ways.

I quickly became a resident house assistant and a valuable asset at the house. I had signed up for my own housing and started collecting things for my very own place. During this time I was agoraphobic. I also suffered severe depression, horrible night terrors, and extreme anxiety due to all the years of abuse.

Over time, I started to deal with it and got a little better every day. After staying at Friendship House for eight months, I got my own apartment and have since become very independent. I have been volunteering to help take care of people with disabilities. Volunteering with people is important to me because I know I am giving back—and that feels amazing! I just want to thank everyone involved. I could not have done it without your true kindness and help. Thank you so much. ♥

Sincerely,

Susan



*May the winds unwrap new purpose.  
May the rains nourish your dreams.  
May the year that now invites you  
dance with God's renewing streams.*



Artist: Dana Puhosh

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## Thanks, Yvonne!



Yvonne is in her sixth year at Friendship House. She has worked for 25+ years in the field of Human Services with various populations including people with developmental disabilities and substance use disorder, as well as with psychiatric in-patient services. She has an Associates Degree in Human Services from Skagit Valley College and has been certified to work with chemically-dependent clientele. Yvonne's wisdom and experience allow her to exemplify a healthy balance between compassion and professional boundaries, which inspires the whole staff. Thank you for your leadership! ♥

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## Essential Services – Spread the Word!

- Emergency shelter for men
- Emergency shelter for women and children
- Donation Room on Thursday 10am-3pm
- Transitional houses in Burlington & Mount Vernon
- Supportive case management
- Information & Referral
- Meals served three times daily, 365 days a year



**CREATE THE HIGHEST,  
GRANDEST VISION  
POSSIBLE FOR YOUR LIFE  
BECAUSE YOU BECOME  
WHAT YOU BELIEVE.**

# An Attitude of Gratitude

*Kathie Peterson, Men's House Manager*

Thousands of people have come through the doors of Friendship House. Many are frightened, confused, and not really sure how they got here and where they are going. When they realize that we are not just a place to sleep, but that we are a place where they can heal and focus on themselves, they breathe a sigh of relief.

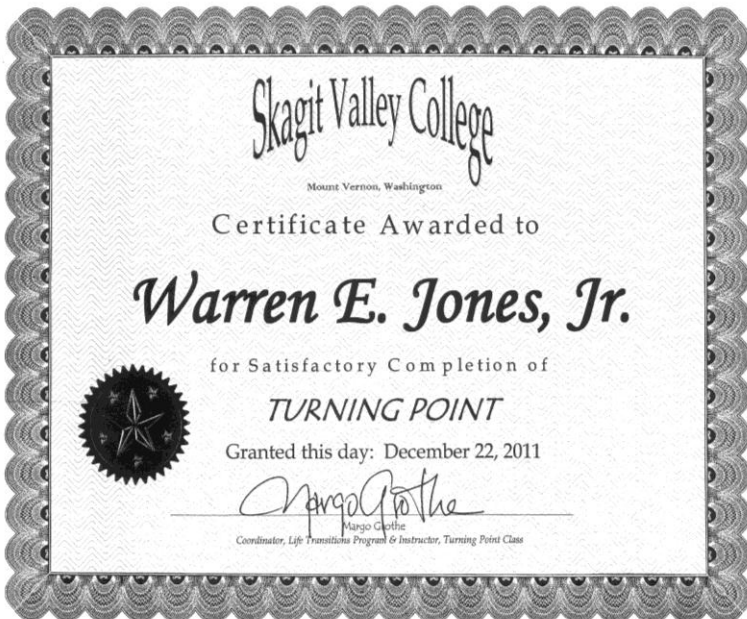
The stress and strain of where to go and what to do weighs them down. It usually takes about a week of decompression before they can begin talking about their goals for employment and permanent housing.

Friendship House's goal is to provide an environment where homeless people can lift their heads up and face today as well as tomorrow. An example of this is Warren Jones. When Warren came to us, he felt he had no options. After a week, Warren found himself doing things he never thought he could. He received a new pair of glasses, had other health issues addressed, and is now attending classes at Skagit Valley College. Being able to go to school and receive encouragement and support from the Friendship House staff has been a tremendous boon for Warren. He pursued the Transitional Life Skills Program, and his enthusiasm and excitement for this program gave him the distinction of graduating as part of its first men's class. Warren moved into permanent housing in January and visits us frequently.

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***After a week, he found himself doing things he never thought he could***

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*Marie joins Warren and another resident at Christmas*

We have watched others come in seeking hope. They find that they are not useless, but are very valuable to our community. The construction workers who have lost jobs due to the economy have a place where they can utilize their skills as well as donate their time to help Friendship House. The line cooks and chefs find a home in our Community Kitchen preparing appetizing meals, which uplifts those who eat here.

***Friendship House's goal is to provide an environment where homeless people can lift their heads up***

Many professionals have suddenly become homeless. This is probably the hardest position to be in. We had one professional who came to us humiliated and depressed. It took him two weeks before he discovered an old passion for landscaping. He reformed our flower beds and that led to peer counseling. His enthusiasm for working with people helped him land a job. He is now a reliable resident in our transitional housing program.

It is an honor to listen to these men's stories and to see an inner light go on. Friendship House helps them to see their value as human beings, and that is a beautiful thing to be a part of. ♥

*Kathie is celebrating her one-year anniversary as Men's House Manager. In 2010, she was an intern at the Women's House. Thanks to her management, we have received many accolades from impressed neighbors. Thanks, Kathie!*



# INSPIRE! The Spirit of Volunteerism

Jadie Dahl, Development Associate

Over the past 25 years, there have been many individuals and groups who have graciously given their time to Friendship House. Volunteers are vital to our success, and we would not be where we are today without them. In 2011 many eager volunteers fulfilled various needs that made both residents and staff very grateful.



Vicki & Bill Aslett with Santa



One of our most invaluable, indispensable volunteers is Vicki Aslett. Vicki has a special place in her heart for Friendship House, and has been volunteering since 2010. "I believe in the foundations of Friendship House. The staff is so supportive and accepting. The residents are always respectful and friendly. It makes me feel good to be with an organization that is uplifting." A longtime resident of Burlington, Vicki says that volunteering is "in her nature." She enjoys working with people and making a difference in their lives.

Among her many projects in 2011, Vicki's main task was organizing Christmas for the residents. Her months of exertion working with donors and organizing and wrapping hundreds of presents did not go unappreciated by residents and staff. A resident commented, "This was a Christmas we wouldn't have had without Friendship House. We deeply appreciate the volunteers, donors, and staff here who made it wonderful for the kids and adults." Thank you to Vicki and all the wonderful volunteers and donors for making Christmas so special!

The time and effort that volunteers have put forth has been phenomenal. Like clockwork, Charlotte comes every Thursday to work in the donation room. Snow and ice could not keep our Tuesday kitchen volunteer Tammany away during the January snow storm. She said, "My van lives for this weather!" It is these examples of community service, compassion, and general love for all of God's children that can inspire us all to volunteer.

In 2012, Friendship House aspires to create a roster of volunteers so that people who have expressed an interest in helping us can be called upon for regular or special opportunities that come up. The strategy is to find the interests of volunteers and match them to the needs of Friendship House. That way it is a fulfilling experience for everyone!

It takes a whole community of caring people to operate Friendship House. People volunteer as cooks and servers, mentors and tutors, facilities workers, office and events assistants. If you would like to volunteer call Jadie at 360.336.6138, or email her at [jadie@skagitfriendshiphouse.org](mailto:jadie@skagitfriendshiphouse.org). Follow us on Facebook, too! ♥

*Jadie graduated from Central Washington University in June 2011, with a degree in Public Health. She served as an intern at the Skagit County Department of Public Health prior to starting at Friendship House last October.*



Vicki with Christmas gifts galore

**E**veryone can be great because anyone can serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.

~Martin Luther King, Jr.



Jadie & Santa

*Thanks to all who volunteer in our kitchen on a regular basis! We rely on you. A special thanks to those who cooked and served on Thanksgiving and Christmas including New Song Church, Kristie, Kathie, Danielle, Chad, and Evan.*

# From Hunger to Hope

Hunger Relief & Worker Re-training Program



Kitchen Manager Kristie Kaaland & Santa

*From Hunger to Hope* is an emerging program at Friendship House. We are currently seeking funding to implement our “big vision.” In the meantime, we have started on a smaller scale to empower one person at a time.

## The Big Vision

*From Hunger to Hope* will build upon our already established and successful hunger relief operation led by Kitchen Manager Kristie Kaaland (who is also the Transitional Housing Manager— and doing a fantastic job!). Most of the meals at Friendship House are prepared and served by our residents. *From Hunger to Hope* will enable us to formalize our meal service and to supply critical solutions to hunger and unemployment. Program graduates will be ready to enter Mount Vernon’s tourism job market that includes casinos and cruise ships (a primary industry cluster). They will gain self-esteem and possess greater self-sufficiency to lead healthy, fulfilling lives.

During each 90-day training session, *From Hunger to Hope* will instruct six formerly-homeless men and women in the culinary arts. Friendship House’s Community Kitchen will be transformed into a hands-on classroom complete with a course syllabus, training materials, and chef’s attire. Class instruction will be facilitated by the Friendship House Kitchen Manager and local chefs from a rotating pool who lead two sessions each week in various cuisines. We also hope to partner with local vocational culinary arts instructors. Trainees will obtain their Food Handlers Permit and certifications in CPR, First Aid, and prevention of communicable diseases.

### Instruction will consist of:

- Basic cooking skills
- Cooking with spices
- Kitchen safety
- Knife skills
- Food pairings
- Nutrition
- Career professionalism
- Proper food handling techniques
- Proper food storage & inventory control

**PUBLIC MEAL TIMES:**  
Breakfast 7:00-8:00am  
Lunch 11:30-12:30pm  
Dinner 5:30-6:30pm



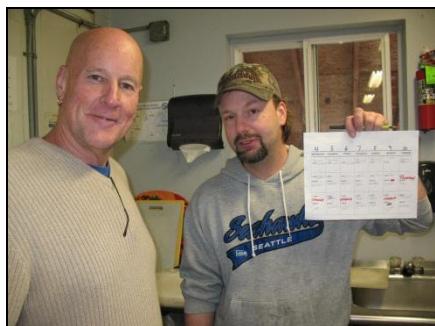
Warren & Jorge lend their talents

During the program’s final month, trainees will continue to assist in the preparation and service of meals while also receiving career counseling to include resume building, interview skills, and job hunting. We will partner with local employment specialists to provide coaching in these areas.



## Starting Small

While we are developing this larger programmatic vision, the program is up-and-running on a smaller scale. Ron stayed at Friendship House for three months during which time he contributed a great deal to our Community Kitchen. As a participant in *From Hunger to Hope*, Ron is now living in one of our transitional houses in exchange for working 10 hours a week in our kitchen. He’s doing an incredible job. Thanks, Ron! ♥



*Tim and Ron present the menu in the Community Kitchen*

## *From Hunger to Hope* LOGO CONTEST!!

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We need a logo for this new program! The winning artist will be featured in our next newsletter, and will be our guest at a special dinner! Email your completed graphic by June 15<sup>th</sup> to [Kristie@skagitfriendshiphouse.org](mailto:Kristie@skagitfriendshiphouse.org).

### Friendship House Staff

Marie Marchand

*Executive Director*

Jadie Dahl

*Development Associate*

Yvonne Bennett

*Women's House Manager*

Kathie Peterson

*Men's House Manager*

Kristie Kaaland

*Kitchen & Transitional  
Housing Manager*

### Board of Directors

Tina Tate, President

Allen Bird, Vice President

Dennis Taylor, Treasurer

Barbara Cheyney, Secretary

Roy Martin

Tom Rose

Michael Custance

Susan Custance

Sharon Dillon

Josh Kelley

## Our Mission

Friendship House of Skagit Valley reflects the heart of God by feeding, sheltering, clothing, and healing those in need.



## Our Vision

Friendship House is a leader in providing comprehensive services and programs for homeless people who seek emergency shelter and supportive transitional housing, empowering them towards self-sufficiency.

[www.SkagitFriendshipHouse.org](http://www.SkagitFriendshipHouse.org) • 360.336.6138 (Office) • 360.336.2418 (Women) • 360.336.2135 (Men)

En Vogue Fashion Show & Auction on March 1st



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