

# HOMELESS ACTION COMMITTEE

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## LETTER FROM EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR- YOUR SUPPORT IS URGENTLY NEEDED!

HAC has been having a difficult few months with a couple of long-term tenants who died and funding cuts that took effect 12/1. HAC's housing program is a Section 8 project based program which had a 10 year contract from HUD under the Section 8 Mod Rehab program that expired in October of this year. We learned recently that we had been paid an incorrect amount for rent for the past ten years. We were receiving the Fair Market Rent (FMR) rental amount, which increases each year, with amounts set by HUD. We learned that we should not have been receiving the FMR but instead should have been receiving what is called an Annual Adjustment Factor (AAF), which is only a slight increase per year. As a result of this, our rents are now being **decreased \$42,000** per year, a cut which is making it very difficult at HAC. In addition, our health insurance costs for 2010 have increased \$3500 for our 5 full-time employees. Other costs have risen as well.

We immediately made an obvious cut, discontinuing a 4-7:30pm shift at the SRO, which supplements our around the clock staff. The 4-7:30 staffer cooked dinner and did some basic cleaning during the busiest shift at our housing program. This cut saves us \$10,000 but it is far short of actual cuts needed. Thanks to **NYS Senator Neil Breslin**, we will be receiving a \$20,000 member item for food costs for one year at our housing program, which will help offset some of the cut. However, we still have to raise close to \$100,000 to operate next year, which is an almost impossible task. We do not see how we can make many other cuts in our budget. **We are appealing to our supporters for help.** We are also unsure how we will raise \$100,000 every year for our van and housing operations and are trying to determine some other permanent solutions. We have written to Senator Charles Schumer, Senator Kirsten Gillibrand, and Rep. Paul Tonko about this issue to ask them to add an amendment to the Section 8 Voucher Reform Act of 2009 which would ask HUD to pay the FMR to all Section 8 Mod Rehab programs operated by non-profits. There also may be other national legislation such as the Housing Preservation bill to ask Congress to include this issue in.

In addition, the NYS legislature just passed a deficit reduction plan which in all likelihood will cut our funding by an additional 12.5% or probably a further **\$8,000 decrease on top of the \$42,000!** Another cut could occur next year too. Please look at our tenant testimonials posted on our website about this issue.

HAC's SRO housing makes a critical difference in the lives of our tenants. We provide permanent housing for up to 30 people who had previously lived on the streets and who are all alcoholics. The SRO is low-demand housing, a unique housing program in Albany which means tenants are not required to be sober or participate in treatment. However, we have found that providing tenants with a place to live has helped them improve sobriety and the quality of their lives. HAC's Outreach Van continues to operate seven days per week from 2-10pm. The Outreach Van provides food, clothing, blankets, referrals, case management services, and transportation to individuals who are sleeping on the streets or in local shelters. **Volunteers** are needed for the HAC Van, especially in the evening from 7-10pm but other times are also needed.

We would like to thank HAC supporters for all you have done for people who are homeless throughout the past year. **Many of you have financially supported our organization this past year through donations as well as volunteering your time.** We are extremely grateful for this support. We realize that it may be difficult for everyone to give but we are hopeful that our supporters will be able to come through and help us at this difficult time! We wish each of you happy holidays and a peaceful and joyous new year! *by Donna DeMaria*

### PLEASE HELP HAC DURING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!

Any donation, whether it is large or small, will help HAC with our programs and in meeting our fundraising goal for the year. Please consider giving a holiday donation in the name of a family member or friend and HAC will send your loved one notification of your gift. **Our 2010 budget requires that we raise \$100,000** in private donations- an overwhelming burden that will be extremely difficult to accomplish! Costs continue to rise at HAC- health insurance, liability insurance, worker's comp, heat, electricity, food, and gas.

Can you help us out with a generous contribution? Perhaps you can consider becoming a **monthly sustainer**. Monthly sustainers donate a certain amount each month. HAC's work with people who are homeless fills a critical gap in our local community.

**-Thank you!**



\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my donation of: \_\_\_\_ \$100 \_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_ \$25 \_\_\_\_ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I am interested in becoming a monthly sustainer for \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_ I would like to volunteer for: \_\_\_\_\_.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable and mail to: HAC, 393 N. Pearl Street, Albany, 12207.**

Homeless Action Committee, Inc.  
393 N. Pearl Street  
Albany, NY 12207

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## ANNUAL DINNER REPORT

In October, HAC's 10th Annual Dinner was held and raised over \$7,800. Honorees were **NYS Sen. Neil Breslin**, for his support of HAC and his key funding through the NYS Senate to HAC; **Julie Ramos**, HAC's dedicated SRO Program Manager since 2007; Sleep-a-thon Honorees: **Andrew Harvey**, who has raised over \$10,000 over the years for HAC; **Maryanne Schrank**, top donor in 2009; and **Rezsine Adams** who stays all night. In addition, several tenants were recognized for their accomplishment of obtaining increased sobriety and stability in housing. 85 people attended the Dinner to celebrate HAC's 20 years of dedication to improving the lives of people who are homeless. Thank you to honorees, HAC's supporters and attendees!

HAC will soon begin organizing our **Sleep-a-thon in the Park**, which will be held in February or March 2010, which is our largest fundraiser. Individuals and groups obtain sponsors for spending at least one hour in the park. This past year's Sleep-a-thon raised over \$20,000!! Please look for our upcoming mailing!

## Special Thanks to Dinner Program Booklet Advertisers/Auction Donors

HAC would like to *thank the following organizations/companies* for their support of HAC by taking out an ad in our Program Booklet for the Annual Dinner: Policy Research Associates; Honest Weight Food Co-op; Dunbrook Mobil; Capital District Community Loan Fund; ClearView Center; the College of St. Rose; Newkirk Products; United Tenants of Albany; El Loco Café; Lusco Paper; WeatherGuard Roofing; World Wide Gas Turbines; CSEA; Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Albany; Martin, Harding & Mazzotti; Legal Aid Society of Northeastern NY.

HAC would also like to thank *donors to our Silent Auction*: FYE; Dutch Apple Cruises; Windham Mountain; Spectrum Theater; NYSTI; Bromley Mountain; Belleayre Mountain; Hoffman's Car Wash; Book House; Clement Frame Shop; Silver Parrot; Albany Institute of History & Art; El Loco; 99 Restaurant; Madison Theater; Pottery Place; Troy Savings Bank Music Hall; Capital Gutters & Roof; Cheesecake Factory; TA-KE Japanese Steakhouse; Marsha & Gary Serreno; Heidi Wiedemann; Glenmont Car Wash; Lauri Nakovics; River Rocks; Capital City Imported Cars; Kathy Paulsen; Stephanie & Curtis Canham; Stewart's Shops; Maryanne Schrank; Peter Scagnelli; Café Capriccio; New World Restaurant; Lisanne Forgione; Outback Steakhouse.

## SPECIAL THANKS TO:

-NYS Senator Neil Breslin for his \$20,000 member item for food costs.

-BTU Heating & Cooling for their pro bono repairs on our HVAC system & to SEFCU for connecting us!

## IN MEMORY OF GEORGE BEDDOW

George lived at our SRO from '01 until he died in October of this year. He was a gruff man, but deep down had a heart and a soft side. In the last year of his life, he changed and vowed not to die a miserable man.

George was artistic and very creative. He made beautiful crosses, churches and trucks out of cardboard. Creating these projects helped him maintain sobriety since Oct of 2008 (except 2 days). The SRO is not the same without him. Everyone misses him here. Even though he was difficult and challenging at times, he was like family to all of us. For several months, George had Hospice at the SRO. He was non-compliant with them at times but they handled him with dignity and loved him as he did them.

HAC's staff was absolutely phenomenal the last few months of George's life. He knew that he was dying and he wanted to die at the SRO and not in a hospital or nursing home. Our staff went above and beyond what is expected of them in caring for George. They helped to change him, apply cream and Bengay to him, rubbed his back, helped to lift him into bed or the commode, gave him his meds, sat with him when he was in distress and couldn't catch his breath and spent time with him to ensure he was okay, and called Hospice when necessary. They carried a baby monitor so they could hear him if he was in distress and faced many scares when he couldn't breathe. Staff ran errands for him almost daily. His last few weeks were extremely difficult for him and staff. He did not die an easy death and really suffered.

In the last 24 hours, staff was with him constantly and so many people were by his bedside even when they weren't working. Staff who had already worked came in and spent all night with him. Staff volunteered to sit with him when he was transferred to the Hospice Inn. Unfortunately, he died on the way there.

I was incredibly touched by how wonderful our staff were with him. Another tenant also helped him tremendously and was like a personal aide to him. It was only a month earlier that another long term tenant, Walter Kubiak, died of cancer. Walter was also well loved by staff and tenants and is deeply missed.

I would like to again thank all of our staff, his tenant friend, and Hospice for all they did for George. His wishes of living at home at the end of his life were honored because of all of you. We miss you George!