

April 2019



REACH News

News from REACH Home 2018-19

REACH is closing as of April 15. There may be a few, who are waiting to move to an apartment, staying on. For others, arrangements will be made with other shelters to house them. No one will be left without shelter.



Congratulations to our social work team who report that once again we will have been successful in **helping more than 40% of our guests secure permanent housing.**

We are most appreciative of all who have made this year's Home a success, especially:

- **Evelyn Penn, our House Manager.** She has put in many extra hours and has maintained a kind and firm management style that has helped to create the culture we try to foster at REACH Home.
- **Our staff** who have filled in the many hours of care and supervision of the home. Many of our staff have come from their own experiences of homelessness and we have appreciated the ways in which they relate to our guests. REACH Team has voted to give each staff member a bonus related to the hours that they have worked. We wish each one a safe and good summer.
- **Dimitri House**, especially Laurie Prizel, Director, and Mike Palischeck, volunteer handyman, who have lent support to this year's home.
- **Our evening meal providers.** A big THANK YOU to all the people and groups that have brought in evening meals for our guests. These meals, and your visits, with our guests have added immeasurably to the quality of the home life we create.
- **The REACH Team** and all the hours that you have given to fundraising, managing, giving medical care, driving guests, running errands, managing the store room, maintaining the building, and so many other tasks, it could not happen without you!

Now we need to **clean up** and leave the building in good shape and store our assets safely. Our store and clean up manager, **John Curran**, has announced

the following schedule:

Mon. April 15th: 11:00am - 4:30pm

Wed. April 17:10:00am- Noon

Fri. April 19: NO ACTIVITY (Good Friday)

Sat. April 20: 11:00am - 4:30pm

Mon. April 22:11:00am - 4:30pm (Earth Day)

Wed. April 23:11:00am - 4:30pm

Fri. April 25: 11:00am - 4:30pm

Sat. April 26: 11:00am - 4:30pm

Volunteers are welcome at these hours. We thank John for his tireless work in this area of our organization.

Will there be another REACH Home? At this stage we do not know what will happen next winter, but given the numbers we are seeing each year, it is most likely we will be opening another winter shelter. Our dream would be to have our own building near the proposed Tiny Home Village for this purpose. But this is a dream that is a far way off at present. Please keep this in your thoughts and prayers



REACH Tiny Home Village

The Tiny Home Committee is up and running under the leadership of Susan Maxwell their

chair. Several other interested people have now joined this committee and we are meeting weekly to determine our next steps. We are most thankful to St. Stephen's Episcopal Church who have given us a place to hold these weekly meetings. We continue to focus on the original site on St. Paul's Street, and to this date have completed an environmental survey, thanks to Raymond Wenzel of CPL Architecture.

We are exploring architectural consultants as well as developmental advice from a number of sources. We hope to be making a proposal to the City in the next few months.

As many of you know, this whole concept received a significant impetus when we were awarded a \$50K grant through Rochester Monroe Anti-Poverty Initiative's (RMAPI) participatory budget process. One result of this is that we are now meeting regularly with RMAPI and the other awardees to both learn from these awardees and to build relationships with other groups who are addressing poverty in our region. We have submitted a draft strategic plan to RMAPI and now will continue to work with them in the re-

fining of this plan.



In anticipation of our success in gaining the land where we hope to build the First Tiny Home Village, John Curran continues with the work of land clearing and tidying. This work is helping us to gain good relationships with the neighbors and we are

most grateful for all of the volunteer hours John has been able to muster. Here are some photos of the latest work being done by members of the NROTC.

News from the BOARD

The first thing to note is that we are saying farewell to our treasurer **David Gloss**. David has served us during the past two years and will be leaving us at the end of this month. We thank David for his steady hand and clear reporting during these years. REACH would not be able to operate without this kind of volunteer support. David did this with a great sense of humor and a deeply felt compassion for our mission. Thank you, David!

We welcome two new people to assist us with our financial reporting. Replacing David for our day to day operations will be **Lydia Worboys**, who is the Accounting Assistant at St. Ann's Community and came forward when Peter announced our need at Christ Episcopal Church a month ago. She looks forward to meeting the Board and hopefully will do this in May. We welcome her to the REACH team!

Since we are becoming a 501(c)(3) organization and will have a new level of reporting to the IRS we will also have a second treasurer, **Kyle Geer**, who will serve as a consultant to Lydia and help us with the reports that we have to make to the IRS. Kyle is on the Auditing team at Constellation Brands and met Peter at a social gathering. We welcome him to the REACH team!

As already mentioned, we are in the process of applying to become a 501(c)(3) organization, allowing us to receive charitable donations. We are being assisted in this by the kind services of **John D'Amanda** of **Nixon Peabody**

who is offering REACH pro bono support in this matter. Thank you, John! We hope to be submitting our application very soon and then will await the IRS ruling. Currently that is taking up to nine months, unless we have an offer of a grant or gift that is time limited and then we can apply for an expedited schedule. So if any of our readers care to make an offer we welcome it!!

We continue to welcome donations and these may be made at [FLACE](#). All donations are tax deductible. Or you may send donations to REACH Advocacy, Inc. at PO Box 10845, Rochester, NY 14610.

Board development continues to be a central topic at our board meetings, and we are searching for the right people to add diversity and experience as we seek to live into our mission. We hope that by the end of the year we will have a complete slate of board members.

Meet a member of our Staff:

Patrick Krebbeks (35). Patrick has been a REACH staff member for this whole season. He grew up in Avon and in his teens got addicted to heroin. This addiction ultimately forced him to leave home and he was homeless for 12 years living with his addiction. About six years ago he spent a short time in jail and decided to go onto a Methadone support program and did this for five years. He has now tapered off that program and has been Methadone free for the past year. Through Person Centered Housing (PCHO) Patrick has been in his own place now for just over a year.



Through PCHO he learned about REACH and applied for and was accepted onto our staff. Here he has found a niche for the kind of work he would like to do and plans to begin by taking a NYS Peer Specialist Training program in the very near future.

He credits his sister, Kim, as his inspiration. She too had become addicted to heroin, but in her twenties, she broke free of this illness and now is married and has a three-year-old daughter, Maggie. Patrick loves being "Uncle Patrick".

Another powerful source that helped Patrick change his life is that he has seen too many of his friends die at a young age. He now attends a grief group, started by a friend of his, to both contribute and get support as he deals with his own losses. To stay focused on what he is doing with his life, he

also regularly attends a Heroin Anonymous group.



Meet one of our Former Guests

Suzanne Archetko(55) Our Newsletter readers will remember Suzie from last year's REACH Home. Her's was the smiling face that met us in the kitchen when we came into the building through the rear door. Suzie left when the home closed in April. She had enjoyed a long period of being drug free and sober at REACH Home. She moved in with

some friends who were also REACH guests. Unfortunately, these friends turned out to be a bad influence and she soon was back on drugs and drinking. Worse, these friends ran up a huge debt to drug dealers who came looking for their money and turned to violent tactics that had Suzie terrified. At one point a gun was pointed at her head and she thought she was going to die.

On July 26, she called her friends, Anna and Wally. Somehow, they sensed something was wrong and asked Suzie how she was doing? When she told them of her fears and the trouble she was in, they immediately offered to pick her up and invited her to move in with them. She left that night, leaving all her credit cards and id's.

Anna and Wally took care of her during a rough period of withdrawal and she survived because of their care. Suzie has not touched a drink or a drug since July 26! That is now the date of her new life, becoming drug and alcohol free. It has not been easy, twice the dealer has been waiting for her in his car. At one point he put his hand out and made the shape of a gun, but then said, "We are good, can I give you a fix." Suzie said, "No," and was relieved when someone rescued her.

She began looking for a treatment program that would admit her, but none had openings. Still, with Anna and Wally's support she persevered. In August, following some advice from her case-manager and a three day stay at Open Access, she was able to get into ABC's New Directions program and she loves it. She is now in Phase 2 of the program and meets with her group Mondays, Tuesdays, and Fridays. In the evenings she attends NA and AA meetings. Suzie believes that she is well on the way to recovery realizing that she will never be fully recovered and must always be on guard against any kind of relapse.

One of the benefits of being drug free is that she is re-uniting with her family and enjoys spending time with some of her eight children and eleven grandchildren. She goes to family cook-outs and they talk on the phone. It is like a new beginning. She says in this new life she feels that she is regaining respect and trust. Along with Wally and Anna she moved into a large old home. She has her own room and they share large kitchen and living areas. Suzie says they cook together and have great meals. She is now saving and feels very good about this nest egg. Now she is looking for ways to give back and connect to the wider community of her neighborhood.

As she looks back on her time at REACH, Suzie says that REACH helped her to put her whole life into perspective. Here is what she wrote: "I am so thankful for the foundation you've all tried to build for us when we left Reach. It's a part of my life that I was blessed to experience and will never forget. REACH Home was the best experience and helped me to understand what it meant to be in a family." She still keeps in touch with several of her fellow guests. We wish her well on this new phase of her life.

REACH Team actions and concerns:

The Rochester Tenants Union is seeking public support to change NYS laws that effect the quality of lives of those who rent in our community. These laws would help to mitigate the numbers of families being evicted. Here is a clip of a recent action: [Rochester Tenants Union Action](#). There are approximately 40 eviction hearings per day in Rochester. [Click here to read the legislative agenda of Housing Justice for All.](#)

Resources that may interest our readers:

Supportive Housing Network of NYS The Network and its members advocate to preserve and increase capital funding, as well as operating and service funding for supportive housing. The Network also champions policies that make development and operation of supportive housing easier and more effective. <https://shnny.org>

Opportunity Starts at Home is a long-term, multi-sector campaign to meet the rental housing needs of the nation's low-income people. Housing affordability is central to other national priorities, like health care, food security, education and more. Yet the gap between rents and incomes is growing, and this is compounded by unprecedented threats to federal housing assistance. Proven solutions to ending homelessness and housing instability exist - what's missing is the political will to provide resources that will put

these solutions into practice in communities across the nation. <https://www.opportunityhome.org/about-us/>

Quixote Communities mission is to provide housing opportunities for people experiencing homelessness. We strive to create communities that promote access to the care and services their residents need to help them achieve their goals. *They have established two tiny home villages and are working on a third.* Check out their website <http://www.quixotecomunities.org>

Thank you for your interest and support of REACH.
For more information please check out our Website at reachadvocacy.org.

