

Volume 3 Issue 3

Teens and Veterans and Inmates! Oh My!

– *Working Together to Get it Done*

Low-income people with disabilities continue to reach out to SAWS® by the hundreds across the state. While SAWS has more than 500 volunteers statewide, it still isn't enough to meet the need of these folks who are trapped in their homes by their disabilities. Part of the mission of SAWS is to establish partnerships with and be a resource to organizations that provide safe housing, community development and job or skills training for those they serve, particularly veterans and at-risk youth. So SAWS is exploring creative ways to meet the growing need for volunteer support through partnerships.

In South Bend, Carpenter's Hands of Granger Community Church, the St. Joseph County SAWS affiliate, led by Frank Aquilla, is tapping into several sources for volunteer help. Veterans are playing their part in the South Bend effort. "The SAW's Team of St. Joe County, IN, powered by Carpenter's Hands of Granger Community Church, the U.S. Marine Corps, Miller's Vets, and DLZ Associates is comprised of a handful of gal's and guy's with big hearts. But we are looking for a few more good women and men to drive this serving ministry (teens and adults)," said Aquilla. In 2011, Carpenter's Hands spent 11 months completely renovating a donated multistory building in downtown South Bend to provide housing for homeless veterans. Last year they renovated a smaller former storage facility into a Recreation Center for those



same veterans. In response to this wonderful gift, several of the veterans who have benefitted from these facilities are now "paying it forward" by participating in ramp builds to help others.

The University of Notre Dame's American Society of Civil Engineers' student chapter along with the alumni chapter from South Bend are pitching in to help catch up with the backlog of requests. The Medical Foundation of South Bend is one of the area businesses whose employees are lending their sweat and efforts.

SAWS - Vigo County faces a demand for ramps that is staggering. There are close to 45 individuals that are patiently waiting to regain their freedom, independence and relief for their families. But the volunteer force there

**Employing the inmates of IDOC
gives them the chance
to experience the transforming power
of serving others**

is not large enough. In early June that took a marked turn for the better. The Wabash Valley Correctional Facility in Carlisle, Indiana agreed to help in several ways.

First they have agreed to utilize inmates that are not allowed to leave the facility to prefabricate most of the needed ramps within the prison. Second, they agreed to

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The Nonprofit Homeownership Resource

Extends It's Community Support to SAWs

By Melissa Geitgey
Director of Marketing and Communications
Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership

It's no secret that active communities build strong neighborhoods. But actively participating in a neighborhood is difficult if the home you're living in isn't built to allow you to easily access the world outside.

The Indianapolis Neighborhood Housing Partnership (INHP) is dedicated to doing just that – to support revitalization and development initiatives that ultimately strengthen and encourage the growth of vibrant Indianapolis neighborhoods.

That's why INHP awarded a \$20,000 grant to Servants at Work (SAWs). SAWs' mission to build wheelchair ramps at no cost to the resident is just one of many ways to build community in local neighborhoods. With this grant, SAWs will help 20 Marion County residents with disabilities take an active role in their community. No longer will four

walls prevent them from befriending their neighbors, planting flowers along their home's exterior or greeting neighborhood visitors who walk by.

How does INHP build community?

Providing grants to organizations like SAWs is just one of the many ways INHP builds community in Indianapolis. Established in 1988, INHP is the leading nonprofit homeownership resource in Marion County dedicated to neighborhood revitalization and helping working families and individuals become and remain long-term, successful homeowners.

INHP partners with dozens of local, state and federal government agencies, community organizations, civic groups, banks and lending institutions, and corporations to achieve its mission. The nearly 30-year-old nonprofit offers affordable mortgage, refinancing and home improvement loan options. To prepare families for

successful homeownership, INHP also offers U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) certified pre-purchase homeownership education and mortgage financial advising.

Sustaining homeowner investment since 1988

Since 1988, INHP has empowered thousands of homeowners to sustain their investment in their homes, ultimately helping to strengthen and encourage the growth of vibrant Indianapolis neighborhoods.

In fact, in 2015, INHP was able to support more families than ever before by offering them homebuyer education, advising and lending services. Last year alone, INHP and its community partners collectively enabled nearly 500 families to leverage nearly \$43 million in mortgage financing to purchase a home or make home repairs. Additionally, INHP became more accessible to families throughout Marion County by increasing their online education offerings and opening a new office location on the Southside of Indianapolis.

In order to support community development initiatives in Indianapolis, INHP provides resources that empower residents and organizations – like SAWs – to enhance and revitalize neighborhoods. These innovative initiatives represent the kind of collaborative and comprehensive strategies that will effect positive change throughout Indianapolis communities.

Learn more at INHP.org

Want to learn more? For information about INHP, its services, volunteer opportunities or to make a donation, visit inhp.org or call 317-610-HOME (4663).

Imagine that you are the single grandmother of 3 kids ages 10, 8, and 3, and you don't want them to go to foster care. Your plan wasn't to adopt them, but your deep faith shows you that His plan is, indeed, for you to adopt them. You move forward and adopt them because you know that it is His will, and somehow you will get it done.

Imagine that the youngest, a 3 year old, has spinal bifida and cannot walk. You have no experience with handicapped children, but know the plan can work with faith. Your brother and sister-in-law help when they can, but a 3-year old thinks the door is revolving! You have become the responsible "Nanna."

This was the new reality for Avila. Getting to the driveway meant carrying him down the steps, retrieving the folding wheelchair then putting both in the car. Avila faced the same challenge in reverse once back home. Imagine how hard it is to carry a child with a disability up and down the stairs just to get in and out of the house. And her back wasn't getting any younger!

Someone asked her, "What do you need most?" The impossible dream was to somehow have a wheelchair ramp. A friend suggested Avila call SAWs, "They build wheelchair ramps for people like you and your grandson." She called, and some nice folks from SAWs came to survey the house and find the best way to build a wheelchair ramp in the space available. Together Avila and the

The impossible dream was to somehow have a wheelchair ramp.

SAWs team decided it would have to go from the back door. Then a wonderful team of volunteers came one Saturday, and started and finished the ramp in one day! Avila was now the happiest Nanna ever!

Later I talked with her, and asked how her grandson is doing? Avila said, "Fantastically fine! He found out how to escape the house by himself!" Her neighbors would let her know that he had escaped again.

"All I had to do was put an alarm on the back door so I would know when he had escaped! Every 3-year-old boy needs his freedom, to get out, get dirty and have fun making mud pies! His sisters can take him for walks now where before he was always stuck in the house. He even has a little swimming pool in the yard! We went to Jellystone Park in Knightstown and he loves Boo-Boo the bear," said Avila.

"I have no idea what we would have done without SAWs. Absolutely it was a blessing that we got the ramp. He is just learning to walk a little so he will need the ramp for quite a while. He loves outside activities now that it is nice out!"

Listening to her story, I had a big grin as I thanked her for blessing my day!

Donations are truly needed and appreciated. And volunteers are wonderful, too!

What Do You Need Most?

By Paul Snyder





utilize trustees, along with corrections officers, to do the surveys in surrounding counties that might be too far for the Vigo County volunteers.

Most importantly, the trustees and their corrections officers will also join with the Vigo County SAWs team from the Wabash Independent Living and Learning (WILL) Center to build ramps during the week to help reduce a huge backlog. This will allow the Vigo County SAWs team, led by Dan Grissom, to build multiple ramps each week in hopes of clearing the waiting list before the snow flies.

SAWS is also talking with several

Letter from the Chairman

Volunteers Make The Difference



I am amazed by the accomplishments of the SAWs' Team: From the volunteers that answer the never-ending phone calls and questions, to the volunteers that perform the phone interviews, to the volunteers that make an in-person interview and complete the site survey, to the volunteers that manage the projects, to the volunteers that pre-fab the wooden ramps, to the volunteers that load the trailers, to the volunteers that use their own vehicles to tow the trailers to the job-site, to the volunteers that construct the ramps, to the volunteers that raise the funds, to the volunteers that pay the bills, and to

other veterans organizations around the state and with the Indiana Department of Corrections (IDOC). The IDOC has Community Corrections facilities in 89 of Indiana's 92 counties and inmates are often allowed to do

community service in those counties. Employing the inmates of IDOC gives them the chance to experience the transforming power of serving others in a quick and tangible way. God only knows what the impact of this service may have on their lives.

The goal of Kappa Kares is to develop character and leadership skills in youth in troubled areas

In Indianapolis, two new partnerships are forming. The Crossing School of Business & Entrepreneurship (The Crossing) and Kappa Alpha Psi (Kappa Kares) are working

with SAWs to develop programs for at-risk youth.

The mission of The Crossing is empowering struggling students to become contributing members of their communities through academics, job training and faith-based character education. A key part of The Crossing program is job training, which includes Internships, Work Teams and Micro Business. The goal of this program is to provide "soft skills training and a thorough cross-section of work experience. It also provides local businesses the opportunity to partner with the Crossing and to identify potential future employees."

The goal of Kappa Kares is to develop character and leadership skills in youth in troubled areas and beyond through community service. This promises to be a three-way relationship that would include trade unions, a channel to job opportunities and career growth.

The primary mission of SAWs is and always will be freeing those who are prisoners in their own home. But we are pursuing new ways to achieve that goal and transform lives, which won't require "reinventing the

the volunteers that serve on the Board of Directors, these are the hardest working groups that I have ever been associated.

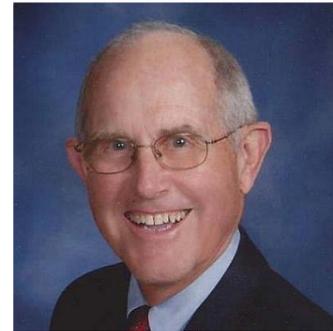
Did you notice something in common about all those people? They are volunteers. Most have day jobs, some are retired, some may have disabilities of their own, but they volunteer their time and give of their resources to help others that are not as fortunate as themselves.

And that is what makes the SAWs' volunteers so special. Thank you, SAWs' volunteers. You are making a difference in the world, one ramp at a time!

Thank you.
Sincerely,

Tom Lipinski
Chairman of the Board of Directors

News & Notes



Wayne Brown

One of the absolutes of this life is that we will all pass away. As the quote goes, "ashes to ashes, dust to dust." None of that makes it easier to lose a friend. I met Wayne Brown when he was helping my brother-in-law prefabricate ramps in 2005. After my brother-in-law's untimely death, Wayne stepped in and took over the prefab crew.

Wayne left us in early June. Everyone with whom he came into contact will miss him. His smile was infectious and his eyes always had a mischievous twinkle! "Joy" is the word that comes to mind when I think of my friend Wayne.

In Dr. Lewis Galloway's eulogy he said, "Wayne has given us a beautiful legacy of faith. He has shown us how to live as a follower of Jesus Christ – how to love God and love our neighbors well, how to use the talents God has given us to make the world a better place for others, how to face the challenges and difficulties of life with grace, and how to live in joy."

We will miss you, Wayne. I know I am a better person for having known you. We will try to continue the good works you have begun until the time we are all united in "... that great gettin' up morning!"

– Rik Hagarty



Vacation Bible Schoolers Lend A Hand

Jerry Bowden and Bob Browne, longtime SAWs volunteers, helped arrange for the Second Presbyterian Church Vacation Bible School 4th and 5th graders to visit the SAWs - Indy warehouse on as part of their "On The Road – God's Great Adventure" activities. About 40 kids arrived, along with their teachers and chaperones. Rik Hagarty gave them an overview of SAWs mission, our operations and our clients. The children were then divided into 4 groups and, with the help of regular SAWs pre-build volunteers, each child got to cut deck boards and drive screws to build ramp components. Given the choice, they might have stayed all day.



TransforMission

SAWs once again hosted a teen group from the United Methodist Church TransforMission summer program. TransforMission is a week-long camp-style mission experience designed to help middle and high school youth connect with God and each other, while serving alongside some of the best mission agencies in Indiana. TransforMission was July 10th through July 16th.



SAWs – Putnam County

2016 represents the 8th year for SAWs - Putnam County. This team is based in the Greencastle Presbyterian Church. So far they have completed 8 ramps and have 8 more scheduled to build. They are still receiving requests for ramps. In a typical year, SAWs – Putnam County will build 20 to 25 ramps. To date they have provided 123 ramps to persons with disabilities in and around Putnam County.

If you would like to support this mission, please go to www.SAWsRamps.org and click the "DONATE" button or "VOLUNTEER" if you would like to share the joy of giving a deserving person their freedom from the prison of their home.



Not All Prisons Have Bars...

...Some Just Have Steps

According to the 2010 US Census, 3.3 million people 15 and older use a wheelchair. Another 10 million use a walking aid, such as a cane, crutches or walker. The 2013 American Community Survey data lists 14.3 million people between the ages of 5 to 75 with disabilities are below the poverty line.

Please make a donation and help us free those trapped in the prisons of their own homes. Volunteer opportunities go well beyond building ramps. The work is easy and so rewarding. People in need are waiting for you. Join us.



**Building Freedom
One Ramp at a Time**

8811 Robbins Road, Indianapolis, IN 46268-1024
(317) 844-7664 info@SAWsRamps.org. www.SAWsRamps.org www.facebook.com/SAWsRamps