

BERKELEY FOOD & HOUSING PROJECT

40
years



1970-
2010

of Continuing to Break the Cycle of Hunger and Homelessness



From the Board President, Dr. Bart Grossman

As Board President of Berkeley Food and Housing Project it is my

honor and pleasure to tell people that for 40 years we have been helping to make a difference in the lives of the homeless and the needy in this community. We are “Continuing to Break the Cycle of Hunger and Homelessness.” The measure of our success can be seen in the decline of chronic homelessness in Berkeley. Collaborative partnerships among government and nonprofit agencies have led to a 48% decrease in the number of chronically homeless individuals over the past five years.

We cannot be satisfied while even one person lacks decent shelter. As a compassionate community we know there is more work to do, and we anticipate the excitement of beginning new efforts. The Board is currently

planning strategic initiatives to strengthen Research and Development functions, sharpen our policy and advocacy work, achieve and maintain financial stability, and build permanent and supportive housing.

The Building Initiative Committee is developing plans to acquire land and build a supportive housing program for homeless men in Berkeley to match our successful North County Women’s Center. Such an endeavor will require much community support. As we move forward to our 50th Anniversary, we hope you join us as we celebrate what we’ve accomplished after 40 years, and what we want to accomplish in the future. We hope to see you at our anniversary celebrations this November and we hope we can count on your involvement in the important work that lies ahead.

BERKELEY FOOD & HOUSING PROJECT:

Historical Snapshots

In February of 1970, deeply concerned about the number of homeless and hungry people in Berkeley, volunteers from the University Lutheran Chapel (ULC) gathered to cook and serve a weekly meal. With the support and blessing of Pastor Gus Schultz, but with little funding, the group's founder, Jerry McCallum, assisted by Ruth Zimmerman, started a tradition that would continue at ULC for twenty-one years.

The group joined a two-year-old summer program that served 200 – 250 people daily, six days a week at First Baptist Church, led Pastor Ray Jennings. They operated at ULC under the name of the Berkeley Emergency Food Project. ... At first, there was little formality in the running of the program. It was legally part of ULC and overseen after the first few years by a Berkeley Emergency Food Project Advisory Board.

In 1978, Proposition 13 passed and hard times hit the organization. Public funding from Berkeley and Alameda County decreased. ... Elimination of public funding cost the organization \$100,000-\$150,000, an amount that had sustained its free, almost-daily meals.

It was up to Director Michael O'Donnell to keep the Project going during the lean years that followed. The group began considering moving toward a more formal, independent status as a nonprofit organization to attract charitable contributions, churches, individuals, and street solicitors from the homeless community to raise and donate funds. In 1981, the Advisory Board expanded to include representatives from churches south of the Berkeley campus. Painful cuts were made, including reducing meals to five days a week.

'70s

'80s

Three years after Prop 13, the Project was just holding on, keeping the meal service going but lacking the ability to provide other services badly needed by homeless people. In October 1981, a grant underwrote a new staff position, charging Associate Pastor of ULC, Reverend Martin Rafanan, to increase fundraising and to work on counseling, governance, and community relations. During his three years, services expanded beyond bread alone. ...

In 1982, a shelter for 25 people was set up in a warehouse-like building called Berkeley Youth Alternatives on Bonar Street. It was run by homeless clients and open 3 - 4 nights a week on a drop-in basis. With minimal funding, it provided counseling services, information on benefits, and community building. The arrangement proved unworkable and, hampered by safety and liability issues, the shelter closed in August 1984.

Homelessness in Berkeley was escalating. In the fall of 1986, the group's newsletter estimated that 1,000 people were living on the streets and another 1,000 sleeping and living, illegally, in cars and trucks parked in the city. Around 20 people took refuge in the cloister and grounds of First Congregational Church of Berkeley. The need for shelter was critical.

The Food Project opened a building fund with the aim of raising \$500,000 to buy a permanent facility, and a healthy donor base grew to 2,000 people. While fundraising progressed, the group began to search for a long-term shelter, beginning with recreation centers and then turning to school sites, warehouses, city-owned parks and vacant lots. But neighborhood after neighborhood refused to have a shelter nearby, frustrating the Project's efforts. In the mid-1980s, a city-owned recreation center on Oregon Street was briefly pressed into service as a shelter, but when the lease came up for renewal, neighbors there too objected.

A full historical narrative will be made available on our website in early 2011.



Interview with the Author, Linda Press Wulf

Our supporters have the most diverse talent. We try to match talent to agency needs. When it came to finding someone to write the history of BFHP, we naturally turned to Linda Press Wulf. Linda is the author of two books of historical fiction for young adults, one set in Poland and South Africa around 1921, the other (due out in February 2011) is about the little-known Children's Crusade of 1212. She is currently working on her first book for adults, set in South Africa in the last decades of apartheid. She grew up in South Africa.

How did you first hear about BFHP?

I think it was an article in a newspaper about its success rate with permanent placements of women in apartments.

How did you get interested in writing the history project?

I have always loved writing, and find it very satisfying to pull bits of information from various sources together and weave them together in a smooth, chronological whole, so this seemed an ideal volunteer project for me. I've been interested in helping BFHP for a few years, since I learned of its extraordinary success rate in placing women in permanent housing, with all the preparation and follow-up involved. I'm not very good at volunteer work that involves follow-through with phone calls and interviews and meetings, as I'm a procrastinator and I like to work alone, but if I'm given written sources (and I credit Paul Cwynar for providing all the written material, including emailed answers and responses by important figures in the History), then I really enjoy sorting through the pieces and collating and cross referencing. I also had two very helpful interviews with Wendy Georges and Terrie Light.

Have you done anything like this before?

The only thing similar has been putting together a Canadian guide for people on how to manage an investment in a single building with a few apartments that would be rented out – I think it was called Being A Small Landlord, which my brother joked was “somewhat rude to shorter people who are just as capable as people taller than me, thank you.”

Where did you start with this project?

In any nonprofit organization, there are so many people doing, helping, leading, inspiring, that mentioning some of them is like drawing up an invitation list to a small wedding – there are always going to be people who won't get their due credit. Here the list included nonprofits and religious communities too, so many of whom helped that it is difficult and dangerous to single out a few for exceptional commitment to helping the homeless. I was working only on the basis of limited information and I hope those who feel their contributions were not acknowledged will forgive me. It was patently clear in the History that BFHP could not have done and grown so much without countless, inadequately described individuals and compassionate groups. Heartfelt congratulations and respect to BFHP on this anniversary.”

What were some of the challenges of this project?

Giving due credit to ALL the hands and hearts.

What would you want people to take away from your work on the history project?

Yes We Can (and can and can and can, with persistence, even when it's not a quick fix – a good lesson, given the high number of people criticizing Obama for not having fixed everything already).

WHO'S WHO AT THE CELEBRATIONS

40th Anniversary Honorary Co-Chairs



Hon. Tom Bates, Mayor of Berkeley

and

Hon. Keith Carson, Alameda County
Board of Supervisors, 5th District



Business Leaders Breakfast Special Guest Speaker

Founder of Noah's Bagels and Bread & Circus, Alper has four decades of business experience. A serial entrepreneur, his experience includes concept creation, marketing, retailing, food service and sales management. His new book, *Business Mensch: Timeless Wisdom for Today's Entrepreneur*, is a practical and spiritual guide to help aspiring entrepreneurs find success and satisfaction in their work. His book will be given to guests at the Business Leaders Breakfast.



Community Celebration Honoree

Senator Loni Hancock has spent four decades as a forceful advocate for open government, educational reform, environmental protection, economic development, and social justice. BFHP honors her for her visionary leadership in the creation of the North County Women's Center.



Find us on Facebook, Twitter (twitter.com/berkeleyfood) and Flickr (flickr.com/bfhp)



Events

Interfaith Celebration

Sunday November 7, 2010

4:30 p.m.

St. Paul AME Church

Special Guest Speaker

Herb K. Schultz, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
2024 Ashby Avenue, Berkeley

Free

Business Leaders Breakfast

Wednesday November 10, 2010

8:00 a.m.

Honoring

Union Bank • Bayer

Restaurants Unlimited, Inc., dba Skates on the Bay

Special Guest Speaker

Noah Alper, Entrepreneur and Founder of Noah's New York Bagels and five other ventures, Author of *Business Mensch*
Special Gift for all Attendees: An Autographed Edition of his book

Skates on the Bay • 100 Seawall Drive, Berkeley

\$100 per person

Community Celebration

Friday November 12, 2010

6:00 pm

Honoring CA State Senator Loni Hancock

**Cajun Food and Music
with Historic Retrospective and Auction**

Pauley Ballroom, UC Berkeley Campus
Bancroft Way (near Telegraph) • Berkeley

\$40 per person

Join Us!

HONORARY HOST COMMITTEE

Hon. Keith Carson &
Hon. Tom Bates, Co-Chairs
Hon. Max Anderson
Bob Canter
Hon. Laurie Capitelli
Richard Crispino
Jonathan DeYoe
Dale and Alice Edmondson
Cynthia Geddes
Bart Grossman
Eve Howard
Phil Kamlarz
Ali Kashani
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Hon. Barbara Lee
Pastor Odette Lockwood-Stewart
Hon. Linda Maio
Kim Malcolm
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**Sponsorships for all
events welcomed.**

For more information, please contact Earp Events & Fundraising at 510-839-3100 or events@earpevents.com.

Interview with Daniel Rolnik

Daniel Rolnik, a 2011 graduate at Ex'pression College, created a documentary about BFHP. The film will premier at BFHP's 40th Anniversary Community Celebration on November 12 at UC Berkeley's Pauley Ballroom. His partners on the documentary are Steve Boyd, Kaia de Ocampo and Jerrel Johnson.

Daniel, tell me a bit about yourself.

I grew up in Los Angeles, where homelessness is extremely prevalent in areas like Venice Beach and downtown, and I wish there was something as great as the BFHP there to help people who have fallen upon misfortune get back on their feet again.

How did you get interested in documentaries?

I first became interested in documentaries when I saw the Errol Morris film 'Fogs of War.' It made my mind explode. The way it's lit, the way MacNamera's face looks, and how Errol is yelling questions at him, it's incredible. I think I was born thinking about movies, I just love them and will challenge anyone to a 'have you seen this before' competition.

Whose idea was it to create the documentary?

I had a meeting with the CEO of Ex'pression College where we were brainstorming on ways to give back to the community through the use of digital art. Then this idea hit me of making a film about and for BFHP. I contacted Terrie and Paul and met with them. Terrie had all these amazing concepts for visual pieces she wanted to have at the 40th Anniversary. I got so inspired that I drafted up about 50 different short-film ideas. Then, working with Steve, we figured out a way to take all those ideas and put them into one short-film.

Have you done anything like this before?

We did a piece on the Suitcase Clinic, which was awesome because they operate their women's clinic out of BFHP's women's shelter. You can view that film along with the BFHP film at www.bronkfilms.tumblr.com

Where did you start?

I started the project by researching homelessness in the Bay Area. I also met and corresponded with various professionals on the topic, as well as journalists from the Chronicle and East Bay Express who led me to even more resources. Then I met with Paul, Terrie, and Geoff at BFHP to ask them a million questions I had about their organization and the issue of homelessness. I was really amazed at how they were able to help people who were homeless get back on their feet again. I learned BFHP goes beyond food and housing. They help their clients get back their self-confidence to make things start

happening.

What were some of the challenges of this project?

The major challenge of the project is taking people's unique stories and weaving them into one solid functioning narrative. We never know what anyone is going to tell us because we don't script anything.

What are some of the most rewarding moments?

The most rewarding moment for me was one day after filming an interview with a client at the quarter meal he came up to us and was smiling and saying that he felt so good to be able to give back to the community. That even though he literally had nothing but the clothes on his back, he could still feel like he could give something back to the world. He could share his story with our film in the hope that people who see it never have to go through what he went through.

What would you want people to take away from your documentary?

I would like people to see that there is an organization right here in Berkeley doing something very real and deep for the homeless population. I want viewers to flip their minds and change how they think about homelessness. The next time you see someone asking you for change, instead of just giving him or her some quarters, you can lead them to the BFHP multi service center and quite possibly progress that person's life beyond their dreams.

Watch ABC 7's special coverage of BFHP online



Go to: <http://abclocal.go.com/kgov/video?id=7572598&pid=7572597>

GIVING BACK

Ways to Give

Whole Foods Market of Berkeley

Now through the holidays, for every reusable grocery bag you use, donate the 5 cent bag credit to BFHP (only at Whole Foods, 3000 Telegraph Avenue in Berkeley)

Workplace Giving Campaigns

Ask your Human Resources department

Government Employees/Military Personnel

Donate through the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC), designating BFHP (#47013) as your beneficiary, or through the United Way

Car Donation

www.cars4causes.net or www.donate4charity.com

Escrip

Register your credit cards on www.escrip.com and make 'Berkeley Food - Housing Project' your charity of choice

Lucky SHARES card

Use at Save Mart, S-Mart Foods, Lucky and FoodMaxx. To obtain a card contact Joanna Lavenberg, Development Associate, 510-809-8512 or jlavenberg@bfhp.org

Volunteer Spotlight!

This summer many groups donated invaluable hours of volunteering to BFHP. Clif Bar refurbished the Kitchen at Russell Street Residence. Bayer, Chevron and Matson Integrated Logistics cleaned and painted the North County Women's Center. The Cal Women's Basketball Team and numerous church groups volunteered at the Quarter Meal, Women's Shelter and Men's Shelter.



Clif Bar Volunteers Paint Russel Street Residence

If you or your group would like to volunteer to prepare and serve a meal or to complete a special project, please contact us at volunteers@bfhp.org.

Thanks!

We thank the following businesses, churches, corporations, foundations and organizations that made it possible for us to continue serving a burgeoning client base through these difficult economic times. We also appreciate all individuals who have made it possible for us to not eliminate any services.

Those names are listed on our website.

The Academy, Ackerman's Servicing Volvos, INC., Acme Bread Company, Albert Nahman Plumbing, Alternative Technologies, Bank of the West, Barclays Global Investors, Berkeley Association of Realtors, Berkeley Lions Club, Berkeley Patient's Group, Brown and Brown of Northern California, Inc., The California Wellness Foundation, Catholic Community of Pleasanton, Catholic Community of Pleasanton, Chevron Humankind Matching Gift Program, Cisco Systems, Inc., D&H Construction, Direct Line Tele Response, Drew Properties LLC., Ecole Bilingue, Epworth United Methodist Church, eScrip, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, First Church of Christ Scientist of Berkeley, First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, Five Bridges Foundation, GE Foundation, Hotel Durant, Union Bank, DeYoe Wealth Management, Kaiser Permanente Community Giving Campaign, Kazan, McClain, Abrams, Fernandez, Lyons & Farrise, Kenyon-Lipsky Charitable Fund, Lakeshore Avenue Baptist Church, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, Levi Strauss Foundation, Levinson Benefits Group, Mopps' Children Books, Newman Hall - Holy Spirit Parish, Pacific Gas and Electric Corporation, Panoramic Interests, LLC., Rex Key and Security Lock-Craft, Rotary Club of Danville, Save Mart Supermarkets, Second Church of Christ Scientist, Sisters of Saint Dominic, Smart & Final Charitable Foundation, St. Alban's Episcopal Church, St. Clement's Episcopal Church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church Parish, St. Raymond's Catholic Church, SYSCO, The Lowell Berry Foundation, The San Francisco Foundation, Toyota of Berkeley, United Way, Van Loben Sels/Rembe Rock Foundation



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