

# Village of Hope

218-751-0722

[www.villageofhopebemidji.org](http://www.villageofhopebemidji.org)

July 2011

## A Note from the Executive Director



Sandy Hennem

Summer is finally here and with it comes a new venture in my life as I begin my tenure at Village of Hope. Lessons I've learned included the fact that homelessness is really a symptom of many things; poverty, lack of affordable housing, low paying jobs, economic down turn, lack of education and teen pregnancy just to name a few.

Our emergency shelter houses 28 people in a combination of 6 family units. In addition to shelter we provide 3 nutritious meals and snacks each day as well as supportive case management services. Tenants may stay for up to 30 days and during that time they are working on securing affordable, stable, permanent housing as well as jobs.

Village of Hope promotes a housing first approach to homelessness. Housing first approaches are based on the concept that a homeless family's first and primary need is to obtain stable housing, and that other issues that may affect the household can and should be addressed once housing is obtained. While the family is searching for housing, other concerns are being addressed, such as obtaining jobs. Village of Hope with the assistance of Bi CAP provides on site case management services.

For over 20 years, the housing first methodology has proven to be a practical means of ending and preventing family homelessness. The housing first approach stresses the return of families to independent living as quickly as possible. Created as a time-limited relationship designed to empower participants and foster self-reliance, not endanger independence

### Did You Know?

- *Ground Round is hosting a Celebrity Bartender Event on July 18<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-8? Join your friends and support Village of Hope!*
- *1 out of 4 children in Beltrami County live in poverty- which is 2X the state average?*

Village of Hope promotes self worth and independence through the provision of temporary shelter and supportive services for families experiencing homelessness



### Wish List

- ❖ Fresh Fruits and Vegetables
- ❖ Weed Wacker
- ❖ Picnic Tables
- ❖ Bike Rack
- ❖ Gently used or new G and PG DVD's
- ❖ Toner for copy machines
- ❖ Basic First Aid Supplies

### Story from the heart

I had accepted a position as a Homeless Advocate at the Ours to Serve, House of Hospitality Homeless Shelter. I started the job with apprehension, not knowing exactly what I was in for and really not sure at all what I would be doing.

One of the moments that I will never forget and that shaped my experience working with the homeless happened on one of my first shifts. A little boy, he must not have been over the age of 5, burst through the door. He announced in that little, loud voice, "I am home!", then proceeded to run up and down the stairs with excitement as he was telling me about his school day.

It was from that moment on, I looked at my work differently. I realized that it wasn't just somewhere to spend the night. It was more than a room to keep their stuff while they found their "real" home. It took that little boy, his voice filled with glee, to make me realize that for the people we help.....this is their home, at least for a little while. These children that walk through our doors, know no difference. This is their home.

## We Value

**Family:** Promoting the strength of families through identifying and achieving goals and dreams.

**Respect:** Honoring individual differences and approaching unique needs with kindness, compassion and integrity

**Collaboration:** Creating strong communities through participation in the planning and coordinating of the continuum of services for families experiencing homelessness on a regional level.

If your organization or group is interested in knowing more about the situation of homelessness in our area or in ways you can assist, please contact Sandy Henum at 751-0722 ext. 28 or [henum@villageofhopebemidji.org](mailto:henum@villageofhopebemidji.org)

