

## **Support homeless walk**

**To the editor:**

On April 19, local community organizations plan to walk together to raise money and awareness for the homeless population in Bloomington. Our community's homeless face challenges that often include mental health issues, social issues and addiction. Centerstone not only has a wide array of treatment options for those who are chronically mentally ill, but also for those addicted to drugs and alcohol. Our addictions and forensics department focuses on providing a continuum of care including partial hospitalization, an Intensive Outpatient Program (IOP), medication management, specialty programs and Recovery House.

Recovery House provides short-term housing, education and support for individuals with substance abuse issues in early recovery who lack a safe, sober living environment. This haven is often the first step out of homelessness for many of those struggling with addiction in our community.

To help, please join Centerstone and participate in the Homeward Bound walk. You can participate by signing up to walk, donating to a team and/or contacting Bill Ferry at Centerstone (812-337-2224) for more information.

**Lindsey Wead**

Bloomington

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## **Walk for the homeless**

**To the editor:**

Homelessness is an issue that affects all of us. It's not always a choice, but a combination of medical, mental health and economical issues, or difficulty navigating the system that is supposed to care for those most in need. It's time to deal with homelessness head-on.

Centerstone of Indiana helps address this issue by working with a federal grant to form our Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness or PATH team. The grant provides funds that enable our staff to work with people currently homeless or facing imminent homelessness.

In 2008, Centerstone's PATH program provided services to 221 individuals. Of those served, 43 were diagnosed with some form of severe mental illness. Many others have gone undiagnosed for a variety of reasons including fear of stigma, lack of access to resources or simply being too proud.

Please join the Centerstone staff and other local community agencies in the upcoming Homeward Bound Walk. It's a family-friendly community event to bring greater awareness to the homeless issue facing us. Please visit [www.homewardboundindiana.org](http://www.homewardboundindiana.org) for information on how to join a team, make a donation or learn about the walk on April 19 at Third Street Park.

**James T. Fries**

**Bloomington**

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## **Homeward Bound helps**

To the editor:

Bloomington is not a bubble; we have been significantly impacted by the global financial crisis. In 2007, 24 percent of children in Bloomington were below the poverty level. As of January 2009, the unemployment rate for Indiana was 9.2 percent. These statistics are simply unacceptable.

In a community as compassionate as Bloomington, we must take action against injustice and fight poverty. One of the agencies which addresses these issues is Community Kitchen.

They actively fight poverty by feeding dinner six days a week, delivering food to after-school programs, providing backpacks of food on the weekends to children and operating a summer breakfast program.

Community Kitchen is participating in Homeward Bound with 11 other agencies. In 2008 alone, Homeward Bound Bloomington raised more than \$64,000, with our total reaching more than \$325,000.

Please join us on Sunday, April 19, at noon at Third Street Park for Homeward Bound. Food, entertainment and children's activities will be provided. Each of us has the opportunity to make a difference in the Bloomington community. Support Homeward Bound and fight poverty.

Colleen Clark, Bloomington

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## **Agencies work together**

To the editor:

I thought Nick Hillman's letter was right on target. There is much more cooperation between the nonprofit social service agencies of Monroe County than competition. We sometimes overlap but we never over serve. In these difficult times, we affirm each other's efforts and admit the need is never completely met.

One of the great symbols of this cooperation is the Homeward Bound walk on April 19. Twelve different social service agencies participate in this 5K walk and divide the funds raised. There is much camaraderie, fresh air, refreshments and all for a good cause. I commend the sponsors and thank them.

Joe G. Emerson, Bloomington

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## 2009 Letters to the Editor - Herald Times Bloomington

### **Help Homeward Bound**

To the editor:

We need your support in Homeward Bound. Area 10 Agency on Aging has joined with 11 other local agencies to fight homelessness in Bloomington. As the local agency supporting all seniors of Monroe and Owen counties, Area 10 assists seniors in locating safer, more accommodating and affordable housing in the community. Area 10 also operates three apartment complexes, which house seniors with low income needs. Now our community's seniors need your help! Please donate to Area 10 or another agency of your choosing through Bloomington's 2009 Homeward Bound campaign.

In 2008 alone Area 10 helped 1,326 seniors find safer, more accommodating housing.

Area 10 provides affordable, secure housing to more than 80 seniors.

Our area has a few retirement communities, but most are priced beyond the means of many seniors. Some have waiting lists of up to two years for admission.

At last count, 11,074 people over 65 live in Monroe County, a number growing rapidly as the population ages (2000 census).

Of the people 65 and over in Monroe County, 4,097 live with a disability (SCAN).

Please visit [homewardboundindiana.org/bloomington](http://homewardboundindiana.org/bloomington) (team: Area 10), visit the Endwright Center, or call 935-2521 for more on how to support Area 10 and help area seniors be "Homeward Bound."

Jewel Echelbarger - Ellettsville

### **Help for the homeless**

To the editor:

Sunday, April 19, marks the sixth annual Homeward Bound Homeless Awareness Walk. This fundraiser consistently serves a fabulous opportunity for regional businesses and caring citizens to partner with Bloomington's tireless social service force to accomplish a common goal: generating increased media presence and financial muscle to address a heartbreaking problem — homelessness.

The results of this event will directly affect the lives of hundreds of people right here in Bloomington. These funds enable shelters and outreach programs to provide basics, such as food, shoes, clothing, blankets, transportation and medicine to community individuals in need.

Since its 2003 inception, Homeward Bound has amassed more than \$2.5 million statewide to combat Hoosier Homelessness. The grassroots movement garners more attention each year; this year, there are 11 different walk sites across Indiana.

Participation is easy; just go to [www.homewardboundindiana.org](http://www.homewardboundindiana.org). You can join a local walk team by selecting "register to walk" on the same page. Contact me at Centerstone (337-2224) for more information.

Sacrifice the Starbucks for a week; I guarantee you'll make a major difference in the life of someone experiencing homelessness this year.

Bill Ferry - Bloomington