



Christmas 2018

Working it! Patsy ready to leave St. Elizabeth Seton House and start anew

Patsy seizes the opportunities created at the Seton House, prepared for next chapter

Patsy could barely contain her excitement - she was moving out of St. Elizabeth Ann Seton house to her new apartment in Madison in October! And, she was celebrating her one-year of recovery anniversary.

"It seems a little strange that women and their families are happy to leave Seton House, but that's how we know we're doing our job - helping women and their families build a foundation of financial, social and work skills with new-found confidence to run their own lives," says Erin Shopofski, director of Seton House.

Old Roots, New Dirt

Patsy's enthusiasm for her new place is grounded in her appreciation and connection to Shopofski. "I was referred to Seton House by a friend when I was living in a recovery house in Sun Prairie. I liked Erin's voice on the phone! We met, and I liked her and the program. I felt comfortable enough to move in right away," she recalls.

Originally from Kansas City, Missouri, Patsy and her former husband came to Madison in 2006 for a new start. Patsy reveals, "There were nice people in Madison, and we wanted to make a change in our lives. I prayed a lot over the years here, and had some ups and downs."

When Patsy was down, she found help through a residential treatment program. "It was nice and I was able to get sober," she remembers, "but it was time for me to take the next step in my life." Seton House, located in the heart of an active Madison neighborhood, allowed her to grow in self-reliance with support and enjoy her favorite activities: fishing, bowling and taking long walks in the park.

A deeply spiritual person with rich and fond memories of her deceased father, Patsy seeks meaning and peace in Bible study. "I want to hear God's message, and will find a church soon," she plans.

Shopofski has been part of Patsy's blessings this year in Madison. "Erin helps me with a good laugh to take the worries in

my mind away. I get good advice, especially about budgeting, and help to find my permanent home," Patsy shares. "The five months here were a joy."

First things first

Of the many things Patsy learned at Seton House, learning to care for herself is among the most important. "I enjoy my independence, cooking the things I love to eat (sweet potatoes, cornbread, greens and meatloaf are a favorite dinner), and doing things that are healthy for me. I feel more at peace now."



"At Seton House, I enjoy my independence, cooking the things I love to eat (Sweet potatoes, corn bread, greens, and meatloaf are favorites!) and doing things that are healthy for me. I feel more at peace now."
-Patsy, former Seton House resident

As Patsy prepares for her move, she's ready to advise others who need a safe and supportive transitional housing program. "Seton is a good program. It gets you off the street and gets the foolishness out of your head. Being around good people, like the women who live at Seton House and Erin, helps a lot. You've gotta work the program and you'll be successful - like me!"

As Shopofski helps Patsy assemble the household basics she'll need for her new apartment, she says she'll miss Patsy's stories. "Patsy is a 'people person' so she's

an important part of our community. She keeps her eyes on the neighborhood and the Seton residents. She's been supportive of the younger women and her positive strides on her path make her a beloved role model for everyone."

St. Elizabeth Ann Seton House is a transitional housing program for single women or women with children. With 12 furnished units and individual programming, women are guided through goal setting and planning to improve specific areas of their lives. Residents may stay up to two years to repair credit, regain health, learn parenting skills, or improve work skills or education. It's all tailored to move women toward independence.

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“Always Part of God’s Plan”: Steve’s journey leads him to the Port

Caught in a tough spot, Port St. Vincent de Paul was there to help Steve Ferris when others couldn’t.

With few resources to his name and a contentious roommate situation, Steve, who suffers from schizoaffective disorder, was in need of affordable housing and a supportive environment. “I was basically looking for housing, but didn’t have a lot of money. I had heard of the Port and the good it was doing for others. A lady

from my church helped me check it out and I’m grateful it has worked for me,” he reveals.

Steve, who jokes that he may have some far-reaching relation to the creator of the well-known Ferris Wheel, was moved in to the Port in January 2016 and has been a part of the community and programs ever since. His current goal is to get housing with government assistance in Madison where he can live on his own and get back on his own two feet.

“My goal is to get stable, independent housing in Madison and the Port staff are already getting me connected to something. It could take a few weeks or it might turn into a couple months, it just depends on the application approval process. There’s just not a lot of housing for poorer people,” adds Steve.

Not just a house, but a healing home

In the meantime, the Port provides a furnished place to sleep, do laundry, garden, socialize, and dine. The

resident cook and volunteer groups prepare three meals a day with 24-hour staffing to provide guidance and resources to work toward a job, better health, recovery from substance abuse, and financial stability.

Steve, a man of few words, but a smile that will light the room, earned degrees at UW-Madison in history and Chinese. Steve then taught English in China for a year and when asked, he responded with a chuckle by saying he could hold a conversation in Chinese, but would probably not be discussing nuclear physics.

Shortly after returning to the United States, he was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder in his 20’s while working at WPS Health Insurance. Steve’s condition includes aspects of both schizophrenia and mild bipolar disorder, and can affect how he interacts with others due to delusions or hallucinations, disorganized thinking and stress.

“I owe God a great deal, cause prayer has helped me a great deal in this illness. I feel it was always part of his plan for me to be here at the Port to help get me out of a tough situation. That’s why it’s worked out so well,” Steve notes. Despite some trying times and a divorce, Steve was still able to raise a successful daughter who now lives in Missouri with her husband and two kids. He later remarried and is proud to be a grandpa.

Support from the Port

Steve recognizes Peter Lewandowski, the director of the Port, as one of his greatest influences.

“Peter has helped me a lot. He’s written letters for me to support me getting a place and he’s always ready to listen,” says Steve. “When I leave here I will miss the people the most. This isn’t a depressing place and for a lot of men, it isn’t the end, it’s kind of a stepping stone for them to find their way.”

“Port St. Vincent has provided a safe and caring home where Steve can get the hands-on help that he needs to connect with an array of services from case management to having his health needs met and a fighting chance to obtain lasting housing,” says Lewandowski. “It’s a joy to work with men like Steve who are motivated to get help and move forward with their lives.”

Steve patiently waits and is optimistic his new housing will help lead to more visits from his favorite people. Nearly grateful beyond words, Steve continues, “It’ll especially be a great joy to see my daughter and my two grandkids more. Through it all, my daughter is my greatest success. The Port has made this possible and all I can say is xiexie (Thank you in Chinese).”



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- Steve Ferris, Port resident

Recycle the Warmth BLANKET DRIVE January 25, 26 & 27, 2019



Donate new or gently used blankets at any Madison-area Shopko or Dane County St. Vinny’s store.

New blankets for sale at a special price at Madison-area Shopko stores during the drive.

Providing a hopeful home

When new residents move into the Port or Seton House, they always come with hope, determination and a commitment to improving their lives. But they need a few more things. They arrive with little more than the clothes on their backs, and maybe a duffle bag stuffed with some important documents, mementos and other clothing.

Because they come from shelter, temporary living at a friend's or even just the car, they don't come with bottles of shampoo or dish soap, a favorite pillow or blanket, bleach or even a stock of diapers if there are babies in tow.

We count on you to help make housing a home.

Home at Port St. Vincent (men)

Helps: Madison's longest-serving men's housing program is a transitional house that helps men get back on their feet as they transition to permanent, affordable housing.

Provides: A furnished place to sleep, do laundry, garden, socialize, and dine. Resident cook and volunteer groups prepare three meals a day with 24-hour staffing to provide guidance and resources to work toward a job, better health, recovery from substance abuse, and financial stability.

Needs: With the basic needs met through the Port, the men appreciate bus passes to get to work and appointments, laundry soap, and personal care items like soap, razors and toothbrushes. They can also use items to make their rooms more functional and homey. Consider shopping at one of the seven St. Vincent de Paul's in Dane County to find items to support our male residents.

Home at Seton House (women and children)

Helps: Apartment-style living for women and their children who are transitioning from homelessness or shelter to permanent, affordable housing.

Provides: Residents manage their own apartments and meals, but are supported by the director who helps them develop and work on budgeting, credit repair, educational achievement and work skills. Through these activities, they are prepared to take the next step in their lives.

Needs: Because the units are individual apartments, the women need all the typical things to set up housekeeping. Cleaning supplies are especially useful—and expensive! They also need the basic cleaning tools – brooms, mops, sponges and dish towels. Moms appreciate gift cards for children's activities, toys and school supplies.

Port & Seton House Renovations

Port St. Vincent provided over 30,000 meals in 2018



-After-

Seton House housed ___ families in 2018



-Before-



YOU make the difference!

Financial gifts to St. Vincent de Paul are crucial to keep resident program fees low and affordable, and allow routine upgrades to the facilities, explains Ernie Stetenfeld, St. Vincent de Paul CEO & executive director. "Last year, we invested about \$288,000 in the housing programs to provide services and safe, affordable environments."

The generosity of community members who care about those who are homeless helps ensure that when people are ready to change their lives, the Port and Seton House are available to help them do that with dignity.

-Ernie Stetenfeld
SVdP CEO & Executive Director

Housing Wishlists

Port St. Vincent

- Food
- Bus Passes
- Laundry detergent
- Personal care products

Seton House

- Diaper sizes 3,4 and 5
- Baby wipes
- Bus Passes (adult only)
- Gas cards
- Laundry detergent (pods)
- Dryer sheets
- Feminine hygiene products
- Cleaning supplies
- Non-perishable food items

District Council of Madison, Inc.
Society of St. Vincent de Paul
PO BOX 259686
MADISON WI 53725-9686

Address Service Requested



Special Housing Issue

Helping Our Neighbors in Need

a welcome home



Another Way to Help Your Neighbors in Need: the IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution

If you've reached the age of 70½, you have a special opportunity to support the services of your local St. Vincent de Paul with a gift from your IRA or individual retirement annuity and claim a charitable income tax deduction with a gift called a *qualified charitable distribution*.

1. To make a contribution, work directly with your IRA trustee or custodian to determine that you have the right type of retirement account to make this gift. Direct them to write the check to District Council of Madison, Inc., Society of St. Vincent de Paul (EIN 39-0824876).
2. Make a transfer from the IRA directly to charity. Many trustees and custodians have forms and procedures in place for this transfer. It won't qualify if the trustee or custodian mistakenly puts the IRA money in a non-IRA account of yours as an intermediate step or if the check is made out to you. And, the law doesn't provide a way to correct mistakes!
3. Make sure the check is written and sent to:

District Council of Madison, Inc., Society of St. Vincent de Paul
PO Box 259686
Madison, WI 53725-9686

Please contact **Nancy Hansis, St. Vincent de Paul development director**, at 608-442-7200 x405 or nhansis@svdpmadison.org to learn more about this giving opportunity and the services you can support through the Society of St. Vincent de Paul.



Give Twice. That's Nice!

St. Vinny's gift cards are a perfect gift for the shopper in your family AND benefits your neighbors in need! Pick up a stack at any of our 7 St. Vinny's locations:
-Madison (Odana Rd, Willy St., Dig & Save)
-Sun Prairie
-Stoughton
-Verona
-Waunakee

Become a SPONSOR today!

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Contact: Nancy Hansis, St. Vincent de Paul
Development Director, at 608-442-7200 x405 or
nhansis@svdpmadison.org

