



PEOPLE  
INCORPORATED

MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

# inTOUCH

WINTER 2010 VOLUME 15, ISSUE 3

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BY PEOPLE INCORPORATED

## “I want everyone to feel the love I felt!”

How People Incorporated Homeless Services helped Willie get his life back

**W**illie Willis, Jr., spent four years without a home — living in a shelter, sleeping in cars. “I was suffering from uncontrollable depression. It was so painful. I just wanted to get out of it, to figure out how to get my life back. I used to have a job, had a lot of friends. I’d grown up in a nice family, went to school. I had a normal life.”

At the urging of friends, Willie moved to the Twin Cities from Chicago to escape the crime. He was looking for a job, but became despondent and fell into a depression. Then he was injured at a fire in his apartment, and things just fell apart. “I finally realized I was the only one who could change things. I decided I needed to get help somehow. I managed to see a psychiatrist, and that helped me start



Willie Willis, Jr., at his holiday table

eventually into more permanent housing. Willie spent four months at Hennepin House before moving into his own apartment in Bloomington this fall.

“Hennepin House was so wonderful! The whole staff make you feel at home. They helped me with medications, but most of all they helped me get strong again. You could really tell there was love in the air.

Jodi, Jessie, Gary — everyone was so great. They had an open door and an

open ear. I started to volunteer in the kitchen because I like to cook. That helped me start to feel better and remember the things I like to

do, and how to be social with other people again.

“The staff really go above and beyond. They have a more personal touch — not just with me, but with everyone. It’s really one-to-one help. They understand what people with mental illness go through. They do it because they love it and want to help you get back on track. I really didn’t want to leave!

“It’s great here at my apartment, though. It’s so quiet and I like that. I’ve just been diagnosed with arthritis, so my mobility is limited, but I hope I can eventually go back to work somehow. I’d really like to give back, too — help other people see that there’s hope out there, no matter how bad you feel. I want everyone to feel the love I felt at People Incorporated!”

Give a holiday gift to People Incorporated — see page 7!

turning things around. Then I met Randall from People Incorporated, who helped me get into Hennepin House.”

Hennepin House is one of People Incorporated’s two Safe Havens — a program that helps homeless people with mental illness move off of the street and into safety, and



# Mardi Gras With a Twist

Fourth Annual House-to-Home Event Raises \$19,000 to furnish our residential programs

It was Mardi Gras time this October 29th for People Incorporated’s fourth annual House-to-Home event at the Midland Hills Country Club in St. Paul, which featured the jazz-funk rhythms and smooth vocals of New Orleans’ own Charmaine Neville and band. Over 130 people came together for a night of fun with a purpose—to raise funds to purchase furniture, lamps, and other items to make our residential programs more comfortable and hope-inspiring for our clients. A total of \$19,000 was raised to refurbish twelve residential homes this year. People Incorporated board president Alden Drew chaired the event. Thank you to Alden and all our sponsors for making the evening such a success!



Jim and Mary White



Charmaine Neville and Band



Joan Bilinkoff Corbett and Jack Corbett



Dick and Nancy Nicholson, Ruth and John Huss



Event and board chair, Alden Drew, presents an award to Margee Klas Johnson for the creation and long-term support of the House-to-Home event.

### SPONSORS

**\$2000**  
Trisha Stark, Ph.D., L.P.  
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## Donor Profile Dr. Trisha Stark on Why She Supports People Incorporated

One might expect the vice president of People Incorporated’s board to be an enthusiastic supporter, but for Dr. Trisha Stark, she was passionate about its mission before joining the board. “My grandfather had paranoid schizophrenia, so I am very aware of the need for People Incorporated’s services.” She has given a lead gift to People Incorporated’s Park Avenue campaign and provided the funds to bring national speakers to our annual meetings.

Dr. Stark, who has her own private psychology practice and is the Director of Professional Affairs for the Minnesota Psychological Association, was invited to take a tour of some programs by CEO Tim Burkett several years ago.



She was struck by the uniqueness of People Incorporated’s services, especially for homeless people with mental illness. “They were working out on the streets—approaching them thoughtfully, befriending them, and slowly helping them to get care and housing. No other groups were trying to change

their lives like that. People Incorporated is really helping some of the most vulnerable people in our community. It’s truly a transformative approach. When you give a gift to People Incorporated, you know they are going to do wonderful things with it.”

## A New Year and a New Legislature — and Some Old Concerns

Dear Friends,

It has been many years since we have had such radical changes in the state legislature as those that came out of our most recent election. We are fortunate that the Republicans, who will be in power in 2011, have a strong track record of supporting people with disabilities. And with an eye on the bottom line, they are likely to be open to learning about how our many innovative programs can save the taxpayer money by significantly reducing both hospitalization and incarceration of people with mental illness.

We continue, however, to have the same major concern that we had at this time last year, namely about the demise of General Assistance Medical Coverage (GAMC). GAMC provided stop-gap health care coverage for years for those with disabilities who are waiting to be “accepted” as legitimately disabled by federal health care authorities. The eligibility process takes at least 6 to 12 months, and we are concerned that this will mean a substantial increase in homelessness — people with mental illness are much more likely to wind up on the streets than people with other disabilities due to lack of community and social supports.

This could be ameliorated significantly if Governor Pawlenty reversed his decision to reject the expansion of Medicaid eligibility, or if the new governor signs the executive order before January 15, the date upon which the federal offer for support expires. Since this is the governor’s decision, not the legislature’s, it will be difficult for us to impact this process.

In any case, we hope that the new legislative leadership will result in new ideas about how we, as a community, can support people with mental illness. Eliminating funding does not make the problem go away — but simply shifts the costs to much more

expensive services like emergency rooms, hospitals, police, and prisons. This, in turn, mean worse outcomes for some of our most vulnerable citizens. That’s why programs like ours are win/win for everyone.

We’ll keep you posted on how things develop during the legislative session, and I know that you will stand with us during the next year as you’ve done in the past. We are grateful to all of you for everything you do to make sure that people with mental illness receive the care they need and deserve.



Sincerely,

M. Tim Burkett, Ph. D., CEO

In Memoriam



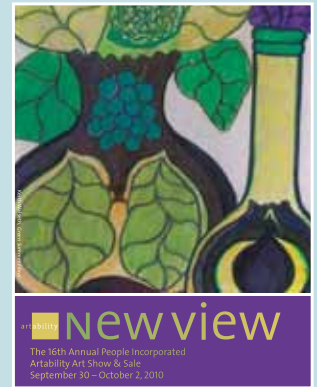
We mark with sadness the passing of one of our founders, the Rev. George S. Knieriemen, who died at the age of 85 on September 25. Rev. Knieriemen was pastor of North Como Presbyterian in Roseville, one of the five Presbyterian congregations that answered Rev. Harry Maghakian’s call to help create a half-way house back in 1969, which was the beginning of People Incorporated. “George was very active in helping to get us off the ground,” says Harry, “and helped us secure favorable purchase terms for the house that became Hewitt House, our first program.” We send our condolences to Rev. Knieriemen’s family and friends on behalf of the People Incorporated family.

## A Room With a NewView

16th Annual Artability features the talents of 109 artists and writers with mental illness

Despite a very wet autumn evening, a wall-to-wall crowd attended the opening reception and awards ceremony for People Incorporated's 16th annual Artability art show and sale on September 30 at the Lutheran Church of the Redeemer in St. Paul. Over 500 people attended the three-day event, held to celebrate the talents, achievements, and creativity of people mental illness and their contributions to our community. The show caps a summer-long program of art and writing workshops that are open to any adult with a mental illness in the community. This year 109 artists exhibited over 290 pieces of artwork and writing, and over \$6,500 in art was sold—90% of which goes to the artist (the remaining 10% goes back into the Artability program). Special guests this year included Ramsey County Commissioner, Toni Carter, and Artability artists Mary Collins and Elias Luke LaVelle. KARE 11 reporter Rena Sarigianopoulos presented the awards. Thanks to all of the wonderful artists and volunteers who worked so hard throughout the year to make the workshops and show such a success!

If you or a person you know would like to participate in the Artability workshops or art show, please send an e-mail to [Artability@PeopleIncorporated.org](mailto:Artability@PeopleIncorporated.org) or call Sarah Beggs, Artability Coordinator, at 651.288.3532. Please note that the Artability program for 2011 will start in April.



### AWARD WINNERS

#### *Best of Show*

Karen Nippoldt

#### *People's Choice*

Mike Conroy

#### *Painting*

1st - Renae Karol

2nd - Jose Sanchez

#### *Graphic Works on Paper*

1st - Connie

2nd - Cecille Bellamy

#### *Mixed Media*

1st - Melissa Kobin-Turvold

2nd - A. Bdrm A.

#### *Sculpture*

1st - Mary Collins

2nd - Gretchen Curtis

#### *Photography*

1st - David P. Cole

2nd - Aaron

Benjamin Erie

#### *Poetry*

1st - Amber Fisher

2nd - Carma Graber

#### *Fiction*

1st - Joel Arvidson

2nd - Art Blair

#### *Non-Fiction*

1st - Lynne D.

Nerenberg

2nd - Carma Graber

#### *Alex Galle*

*Endowment Award*

Audrey Bernard



KARE 11 Reporter  
Rena Sarigianopoulos



Artist Audrey Bernard,  
winner of the Alex Galle  
Endowment Award



Crowds at the awards ceremony



A wall of portraits demonstrates the many talents  
of Artability artists



Commissioner Toni Carter

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JANUARY 1, 2010 - NOVEMBER 20, 2010

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\$250,000 - \$500,000

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Huss, John/Ruth  
Stark, Trisha

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Schneider, Deborah/Allan

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The David Winton Bell Foundation

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West, Jill/Kenneth

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\$500 - \$999

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McGuire, Timothy  
Meyer, Geoffrey  
Nusman, Benjamin  
Ploetz, Patricia/Ed Matthees  
Thomas, Patina  
Voigt, Robert/Mavis  
White, Mary/James

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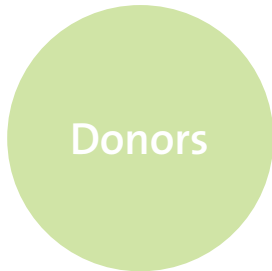
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JANUARY 1, 2010 -  
NOVEMBER 20, 2010

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The Todd and Martha Nicholson Fund of the Nicholson Family Foundation  
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Hogan, Jan  
Huss, John/Ruth  
Jones, Lucy Rosenberry  
Kunin, Connie/Daniel  
Martin, Fred  
Robertson, Cal/Kristin  
Schneider, Allan/Deborah  
Stark, Trisha

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Home Health Agency  
Outpatient Mental Health Services

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Tri-County Crisis Services

### HOMELESS SERVICES

Housing First – Hennepin and Ramsey  
Metropolitan Homeless Outreach Services (MHOP) –  
Hennepin and Ramsey  
Project Recovery  
Project SAIL (Support and Advocacy for Independent  
Living)  
Safe Haven Services – Hennepin House and Ramsey  
House

### RESIDENTIAL SERVICES

Adult Foster Care in Anoka County – Parkway House  
Adult Foster Care Dakota County – Foliage,  
McAndrews, River Hills, Colonial  
Adult Foster Care – Summit Park  
Girard House  
Heather Ridge  
Housing with Services – Edgebrook, Londin, Ruth  
Montreal Courts Supportive Living  
People II

### TREATMENT SERVICES

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Assertive Community Treatment – Homeless  
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- Winter caps
- Winter gloves
- Winter mittens
- Socks
- Sweatshirts - XL and XXL
- Gift cards to Rainbow, Cub, or Target (\$10 or \$20 denominations)

For more information, please contact Leslie DeBoer at 651.288.3508 or [Leslie.DeBoer@PeopleIncorporated.org](mailto:Leslie.DeBoer@PeopleIncorporated.org). Happy Holidays!