



# Annual Report 2010



First Annual Turkey Trot on Thanksgiving Day benefits Helpline House

## From the Director's Desk 2010

*“The ultimate measure of a man is not where one stands in moments of comfort and convenience, but where one stands in times of challenge and controversy.”*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*

In reflecting on the past year, it's clear that our community is recovering from an economic crisis. Yet numbers for food bank use still increase, and social workers continue to offer referrals to meet basic needs to islanders who find themselves without resources and experience disorder and distress in their lives.

Our food bank processed over 50,000 pounds of food a month which eventually finds its way into the hands of hungry families. We also served over 200 households at Thanksgiving with our “Project Wishbone”. In response, donors *initiated* more new food drives in November and December to help *support* their neighbors. Last year also saw an incredible amount of produce from local gardens – a nutritious bonus that is truly appreciated by the users of this service.

Social workers spent even more time seeking alternative resources to connect neighbors to over the past year while encouraging action that helps mitigate depression. Our biggest challenge in 2011 will be the announced elimination or reduction of services by larger agencies and county resources that we rely on as referral sources, such as Kitsap Mental Health (KMH) for clients with severe mental illness. Another challenge will be to make up for significant cuts in our own funding sources, including \$20,000 from a long time private donor, \$28,000 from city funding, \$24,000 from Bainbridge Committee, and \$6,000 from rental assistance through Housing Resources Board (HRB). For the first time Helpline House will have to dip into reserves built up in 2008 and 2009 to provide services and programs despite a 3% cut in our 2011 operating budgets.

While revenue generation is a challenge, donors stepped up and made it their business to keep their donations equal to the level of 2009 private donations. We are grateful for this display of confidence and confirmation of our mission. Because of this financial support and volunteer efforts our community, while struggling, is rich in spirit and compassion. That's how we will weather this crisis – together – neighbor serving neighbor, one neighbor at a time.

Joanne E. Tews  
Executive Director

## VOLUNTEER SERVICES

The need for the basic services provided by the Helpline House volunteer corps continued to increase during 2010. Serving the needs of so many meant continuing to recruit, train and place increasing numbers of community volunteers during the year to work together with professional staff towards solutions to clients' stressful situations. Volunteers logged over 20,000 hours in a dozen ongoing programs and short-term projects.

### **Volunteer Training:**

Helpline House's volunteer training program was re-organized in 2010 to provide a predictable schedule for New Volunteer Orientation, which is now offered on the First Thursday of every other month. On the alternate first Thursdays, a follow-up session—Direct Service Training—is now offered jointly by social work and volunteer management and provides coaching in Boundaries, Customer Service and Resources.

An in-service training provided to established volunteers in April by the Kitsap County Dispute Resolution Service focusing on understanding personal styles of conflict and how to de-escalate tense situations was well received by approximately 40 attendees.

Staff replaced outdated "New Volunteer Orientation" materials by drafting a comprehensive Manual for Volunteers which can be distributed electronically for all volunteers' reference as well as to new volunteers. Staff also attended FEMA training in Volunteer Management sponsored by the Emergency Management office of Kitsap County, gleaning many useful suggestions for recruiting and retaining volunteers.

### **Volunteer Management:**

To facilitate integration of new volunteers and enhance the timeliness of recruiting substitutes when a shift is open, staff developed and implemented an email group system of communicating in the various services. Significant work was also done on consolidating data previously stored in multiple databases, resulting in the elimination of duplicative tasks. Staff implemented a computerized check-in system, ClientCard, in the food bank which was universally appreciated by both clients and volunteers for its effectiveness and speed of access, and by staff for its accurate reporting capabilities. Staff worked side by side with volunteers during the transition from hard-copy record keeping and developed a system to easily update outdated information.

The annual volunteer party in March corresponded with Mardi Gras time, and so one Friday evening Helpline was transformed by southern music and food as all had the opportunity to socialize with other volunteers with whom they normally do not work. The volunteer work of a high school senior who was the creator of "Cakes for Kids & Kin", the custom birthday cake portion of the Happy Birthday Program, was recognized during National Volunteer Week.

The Volunteer Management Team spent two mornings at the Northwest Harvest Cherry Street food bank in Seattle, an organization which provides a

significant amount of free food weekly to Helpline House under a partnership contract. Serving over 1,000 clients one morning and repacking dozens of case lots of bulk food, the team gained perspective on the hunger problem across the water, cultivated important relationships with our partner agency and as a bonus, came away with several new warehouse techniques that have been put to use at Helpline House.

### **Helpline Desk:**

A team of 20 regular and substitute volunteers cheerfully and compassionately managed the 100-plus daily contacts with the public, donors and clients. Helpline Desk volunteers collaborated with social work staff in connecting households to appropriate services, including Washington State Basic Food program and Kitsap County Resources Energy Assistance program. Volunteers managed the medical equipment program by interviewing people requesting equipment and matching their needs with the equipment, collecting deposits and handling returns. During projects such as Project Wishbone and Project Backpack, the Helpline desk volunteers coordinated the sign-ups of up to 200 households as well as receiving donations and responding to inquiries by both clients and the public.

### **Fishline Desk:**

A team of more than 30 regular and substitute volunteers assisted up to 250 households per week with their food shopping needs in the food bank. Beginning in 2010, the volunteers began using the computerized system ClientCard, to check in clients to the food bank and verify information on file. Several new volunteers trained on the Fishline Desk, increasing our crew of much-needed substitute volunteers. While consulting with clients about their food needs, Fishline volunteers tactfully explored with people whether the agency might be able to assist with other resources, and were able to make many referrals for such programs as Commodities and Basic Food. In addition to client services, the Fishline volunteers assist with some shelf stocking duties as time allows, especially with respect to the fresh produce. They also greet people bringing food donations to the food bank and back up the Helpline Desk volunteer with phone reception duties.

### **Food Bank:**

About 20 regular and substitute volunteers form the core of our “in-house” food bank volunteer team, supplemented by about 15 pickup drivers and shoppers who visit the grocery stores several times a week to bring donations to Helpline House as well as make purchases on our behalf. In 2010, the food bank team picked up, shopped for, accepted, processed, sorted, stored and shelved an average of well over 50,000 pounds of food each month.

Community food drives were particularly successful during the November/December holiday period as compared to previous years. An additional storage container was temporarily needed to receive and store the much-appreciated extra foods. Several schools generated food drives during 2010 for the first time. On the other hand, community food donations were down during the other months of the year as compared to previous years, including the annual Postal Food Drive.

Community garden donations continued to be an important source of fresh produce during 2010. The “word” to bring surplus to Helpline seemed to have

gotten out to home gardeners so that Helpline clients were pleased at the quantity and variety of fresh vegetables and fruit offered.

### **Clothing Connection:**

About 20 dedicated volunteers organized in four different shifts man the clothing bank at Helpline House. In 2010, these volunteers accepted donations of well over 10,000 pounds of used clothing in addition to a generous amount of household goods including linens, pots and pans, dishes, small appliances and other items. The clothing bank averaged well over 500 visitors per month who shopped for their family's needs. An increasing number of clients of the Clothing Connection reside in Suquamish/North Kitsap where no such service is available.

### **Medical Equipment:**

Requests for medical equipment increased slightly in 2010 over previous years. We continue to receive donations of a wide variety of medical equipment from the community. Volunteers were diligent in reminding community members with loaned equipment of the temporary nature of the arrangement; much equipment was returned in response to their efforts. Progress was made during 2010 towards converting the paper record keeping system for this program to a computerized tracking system which will be implemented in 2011.

### **Employment:**

The manual labor program remained more or less steady in terms of workers and jobs offered by the community in 2010. Helpline House continues to employ these workers on occasion throughout the year for moving large amounts of food and/or equipment. One dedicated volunteer continues in the coordinator role.

### **Backpack & Holiday Projects:**

In 2010, volunteer committees along with volunteer management staff organized and provided leadership for several short term projects, including Project Backpack, Project Wishbone and the Holiday Shoppe. Dozens of volunteers were recruited from both permanent volunteer staff as well as some community members to implement the projects. Project Wishbone and the Holiday Shoppe each served approximately 200 households. Project Backpack supplied about 200 Bainbridge Island students with backpacks and back to school supplies.

### **Community Service & Community Events:**

Volunteer Management managed about 80 community service workers who performed 1,450 hours of essential services during 2010 in a variety of programs, projects and events. This year was also the second successful year of the "Summer of Service" programs for teens; 18 teens participated by working in the food bank for at least 15 hours each during the summer months. In addition, Volunteer Management collaborated with about 50 different businesses, scouting groups, church groups, non-profits, schools and community groups in the development of their ideas for projects and events to benefit Helpline. The projects varied in scope and results. Examples of community projects include a food drive conducted by a single boy scout, the proceeds from the photographer of a bridal fair, baby supplies collected regularly by a faith community, and a community wide toy drive at the holidays. Staff worked with each person and organization to ensure their efforts

were beneficial to the agency and in alignment with Helpline House's mission as well as much appreciated.

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

How does a semi-literate man, with a 10 day vacate notice, stay in his apartment? He comes to Helpline to see a social worker who negotiates with the landlord to find out what would keep him in housing. This example points out how, on a daily basis, agency social workers contribute to solving community members' problems. Those problems might be to prevent homelessness, help a woman escape a domestic violence situation, or get a client into see a dentist for emergency dental work.

In 2010, social workers helped, on average, 165 unduplicated households each month; the same number of households in 2009. The number of new clients each month dropped from 36 new clients in 2009 to 32 new clients a month in 2010. There was a slight increase in domestic violence cases, seven per month, up from 2009 when there were five cases per month. There was an increase in alcohol/drug issues addressed (6 per month) up from 2009 when there were four per month.

Another area of increased service was the role of the Veterans Service Officer for Bainbridge Island (VFW) Post 173. This is a one time financial assistance up to \$1,500 that can be used to pay rent, utilities, or car repair. Initially there were a few veterans per year using this fund but by 2010 there were two to four veterans a month coming to us for assistance to access this fund.

Helpline continues to promote the concept of bridging clients to longer term services and resources and through their own actions, more control over their circumstances. Research tells us that when a person has control over their lives they are more resilient and are less prone to depression and other negative influences when making important life decisions.

We maintain that outreach is an important function of our organization and met with Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District personnel to request and were granted a \$2,000 budget increase for 2011 programming, which is much appreciated. Another successful connection was to the Regional Coordinator of the Salvation Army. As a result, provision of an additional \$600 a month in client support funds was made. The North End Social Service Providers had two meetings during 2010. Out of those meetings came a list of immediate available housing in each community and strategies on ways to detect client fraud.

Our continued use of interns helps control the Individual and Family Counseling budget along with our staff benefiting from new therapeutic approaches. This past year we worked closely with Antioch University, both on their accreditation process as well as with the intern placed here. In 2011, Helpline House will work with Argosy University.

## COUNSELING SERVICES

The 2010 Individual and Family Counseling program averaged nine clients per month, slightly down from 11 per month in 2009. We augmented these services with the development of a new group concept using Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT) methods. The group met for 14 weeks and averaged six clients per session. This group helped clients manage their emotional reactions to people and events.

## SKILLS PLUS

It would be refreshing to begin an annual report with a positive review of the past year. Unfortunately, this is not the case; 2010 was pretty much a repeat of 2009 – high unemployment and a very competitive job market continued to be major obstacles to Skills Plus clients. In addition to helping people write targeted resumes and cover letters, it has become more important to ensure that job seekers have realistic employment objectives, in other words, they are looking for jobs that are an excellent match with their skills and work experience. An ongoing mantra is ‘network, network, network.’ The vast majority of people who found work were successful because they tapped into the ‘hidden job market,’ not from responding to advertised jobs.

On a somewhat brighter note, lay offs seemed to have leveled off in the Puget Sound area. The outlook for 2011 is the continuation of a fairly flat job market, however, companies may start believing the ‘worst is over’ and begin hiring once again.

A new initiative for Skills Plus will be partnering with the Bainbridge Public Library, offering workshops on specific job search topics, such as resume writing, interviewing and networking. Hopefully, this will be an effective strategy to reach community members in need of job search support, but who may be reluctant to seek Helpline services directly.

## COORDINATION OF SERVICES TO SPECIAL NEEDS POPULATION

We have been able to increase the numbers of local beds for adults with developmental disabilities with Neighborhood Home at Serenity expected to break ground on the first phase to provide one new Adult Family Home (AFH) in 2011. Bailey Manor, a new Adult Family Home, became fully licensed for six residents and has settled into a more peaceful coexistence with neighbors.

The assessment and job skill training program at IslandWood for special needs participants and coaches to determine their employability skills, has become a successful and valued partnership for Helpline House, Able Opportunities (an agency that serves developmentally disabled adults) and IslandWood and shows promise for expansion to City Hall and other local organizations.

New services for community members with special needs continue to require support and advocacy such as Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Parks and Recreation District (weekly cooking classes) and increased numbers enjoying socialization and community integration services at Stephen's House and People First membership.

Staff continues to provide best practice guidance to local providers/developers to expand supported and below market housing island wide as well as efforts to stabilize the Eagle Harbor live aboard community.

## ADMINISTRATION

In 2010, we continued our efforts to keep the business office running as efficiently as possible. We worked to keep our website updated and have received numerous compliments as to its content and ease of use. Computer hardware and maintenance costs related to information systems continue to increase each year.

This year, we continued in the realm of social networking. Helpline has a Facebook page with a Helpline Causes page connected to it. We also continued to receive donations via our “Donate Now” button on our website.

The Emergency Plan in its final form was available for staff and volunteers in 2010.

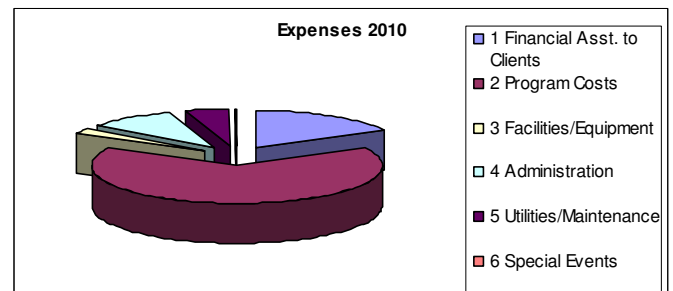
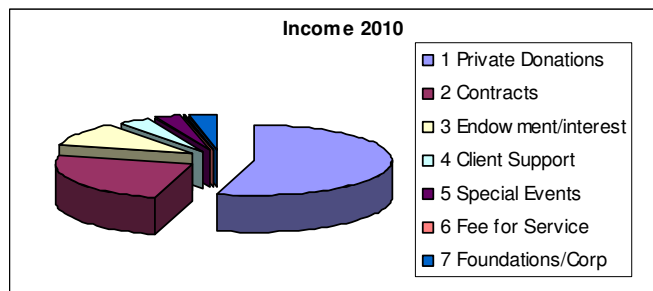
## FISCAL

In 2010, Helpline House experienced a 12% overall decrease in private donations. This amount included One Call For All, United Way, churches, businesses, organizations, and other individual donations. We received a private donation for client housing support as well as two substantial donations of stock.

At the same time, staff worked diligently to keep operational costs in line and be good stewards of client support funds.

**Please note that this is an unaudited statement**

2010 Total Income: \$811,902.			2010 Total Expenses: \$756,510		
Private Donations	442,653	54.5%	Financial Assistance to Clients	130,189	17.2%
Contracts	201,023	24.8%	Program Costs	496,344	65.6%
Endowment and interest	85,709	10.6%	Facilities/Equipment	17,241	2.3%
Local Funding - Client Support	29,286	3.6%	Administration	74,533	9.9%
Special Events	24,650	3.0%	Utilities/Maintenance	37,049	4.9%
Fee for Service Revenue	1,381	0.2%	Special Events	1,154	0.2%
Foundations/Corporations	27,200	3.4%			
<b>Total Income:</b>	<b>\$811,902</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Total Expense:</b>	<b>\$756,510</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Helpline House**

**Board of Directors**

**Board Meeting Calendar for 2010**

All meetings were held at 282 Knechtel Way at 7:30 pm with the exception of the June meeting which was held at the home of Board Member Barbara Bolles.

Thursday January 21, 2010

Thursday February 18, 2010

Thursday March 18, 2010

Thursday April 15, 2010

Thursday May 20, 2010

Thursday June 17, 2010

***No July Meeting***

***No August Meeting***

Thursday September 16, 2010

Thursday October 21, 2010

Thursday November 18, 2010

Thursday December 16, 2010

**BOARD MEMBERS  
2010**

Board Member	Term expires
Susan Vincent, President	12/2012
Barbara Bolles	12/2012
Stella Carosso, Treasurer	12/2011
Robin Denis	12/2010
Geoff Grindeland	12/2012
David Henry, Vice President	12/2010
Linda Henry, Secretary	12/2012
Scott Lindquist	12/2011
Garnet Logan	12/2011
Michael Rosenthal	12/2012
Betty Wiese	12/2012

**CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE PERSONNEL**

Joanne E. Tews, M.S.	Executive Director
Murray Prins, M.S.E., LMHC	Social Work Supervisor

**Helpline House**  
282 Knechtel Way NE  
Bainbridge Is, WA 98110  
206-842-7621  
www.helplinehouse.org