



**Preble Street
Homeless Voices for Justice**

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WHERE TO FIND US:

Every Monday from 9:30-11:30am, HVJ holds a weekly meeting in the Preble Street Resource Center group room. All are welcome to join!

You can also find us in the HVJ office, located in the Preble Street Resource Center, or by contacting Ashley at 775-0026 ext. 1220.

HVJ Purpose Statement

Preble Street Homeless Voices for Justice (HVJ) is a grassroots group that works for social change on behalf of people who experience homelessness and poverty. HVJ is led by a board of people who have all experienced homelessness and is supported by Preble Street staff. The founding chapter in Portland has existed since 1995, with other chapters started in Augusta, Brunswick and Lewiston. Our goal is to build a coalition for and of homeless people throughout Maine, and to empower people whose first-hand perspective has often been absent in the development of policies and programs that impact their social and economic well being.

**HOMELESS
VOICES FOR
JUSTICE**

The HVJ Newsletter

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Summer 2014

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Legislative Update

By: Jeff Vane and dee Clarke

Looking back on the 2014 legislative session, HVJ worked very hard this year. We are proud with what we helped accomplish.

Much of our time and energy was put into the MaineCare expansion effort. HVJ's work with the Cover Maine Now! Coalition was a huge success in that HVJ successfully brought testimony and collected real life stories of people who would benefit from MaineCare expansion. We heard stories of people suffering from life threatening illnesses who can't get the medications they need. We also heard from people who've had to beg and jump through hoops to get their diabetes, high blood pressure, or mental health medica-

tions, oxygen, asthma inhalers, and other needs met. We are happy to say that getting members (members meaning anyone who uses Preble Street, a shelter, or soup kitchen) to go to the State House and tell their stories worked! The House and Senate voted in favor of MaineCare expansion on all three bills that would have granted 70,000 Mainers access to health care. Nice work, people! The House and Senate voted three times to cover our most vulnerable friends and neighbors, including many members here at Preble Street. But Governor Paul LePage vetoed every single one of these bills, publicly stating that

(Continued on Page 3, Leg. Update)

Maine Homeless Legal Project

By: Jim Devine

People who are homeless and living in poverty often face legal issues that have to be resolved before it is possible to lead a better life and become housed. A helpful new effort called the Maine Homeless Legal Project (MHLP) has recently begun at Preble Street, where a number of lawyers have offered to donate their time to work with people on various legal

issues. Some issues these lawyers have worked on include landlord-tenant problems, child support, and receiving benefits that are past due. Pine Tree Legal and the Volunteer Lawyers Project are also collaborating on this effort.

(Continued on Page 3, MHLP)

2014 HVJ Team:

dee Clarke
 Rebecca Dennison
 Jim Devine
 John Monahan
 Judy Newell
 Mary Jo Skofield
 Jeff Vane

HVJ Staff:

Ashley Gorczyca
Community Organizer
 Amy Gallant
Advocacy Coordinator
 Jamie Lasden
Advocacy Intern

DHHS Updates

The state of Maine has made a decision that will make life more difficult for a lot of people. The offices of the Department of Health and Human Services on Marginal Way are set to move into a new building in South Portland near the Jetport.

Anyone applying for SNAP (food stamps), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), or other benefits will now have to take a one hour long bus trip that they may not be able to afford. People who

By: Jim Devine

use the soup kitchen might be forced to skip meals if they need to go to the new offices in South Portland. Child care will be difficult to find.

HVJ believes this move will make difficult lives that more difficult. We think DHHS should stay local and accessible in downtown Portland.

On the third Wednesday of every month, we hold rallies in front of DHHS on Marginal Way between 10 and 11 a.m. We invite everyone to join us!

Health Care for the Homeless

By: Judy Newell

I'm sad to say that the Health Care for the Homeless (HCH) clinic has closed. The closure of the Medical Care program happened at the end of May and the clinic will now only be providing substance abuse, mental health, and dental services until November when the clinic closes permanently. HCH is open Monday through Thursday for substance abuse and mental health services, and Monday through Wednesday for dental services.

Any services that you are utilized there may be transferred to the Portland Community Health Center (PCHC), which has offices on Park Ave and Preble Street. My best advice is to prepare yourself. One way to do that is to start forming relationships with people at PCHC. Some of the services they provide include primary care, counseling and mental health, immunizations, lab work, physical exams, recov-

ery groups, women's health, and disease management.

Unfortunately in life, change does occur. Just when we feel comfortable, we have to make new adjustments. This change has occurred only because of the lack of federal funding. HVJ is concerned that the PCHC will not be able to serve everyone that is now being seen at HCH. We urge you to be proactive and get your foot in the door at PCHC now. We're also concerned that the change in location may present barriers to some with disabilities. I am hopeful that as we make this transition, we will figure out avenues to continue the outstanding health care that's been provided by HCH for many years.

We will keep you all updated as this transition continues.

Calendar of Events

September 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day	2 9:30-11:30 a.m. HVJ meeting	3 8-8:30 a.m. Forum with Shenna Bellows	4	5	6
7	8 9:30-11:30 a.m. HVJ meeting	9	10	11	12	13
14	15 9:30-11:30 a.m. HVJ meeting	16 11 a.m.-1 p.m. Augusta Forum	17 10-11 a.m. DHHS Rally	18 8:30-10 a.m. ESAC meeting 3-4:30 p.m. Lewiston Forum	19	20
21	22 9:30-11:30 a.m. HVJ meeting	23 9-11 a.m. Portland Legislative Forum	24	25 9-11 a.m. Forum with Mike Michaud	26	27
28	29 9:30-11:30 a.m. HVJ meeting	30				

October 2014 Events

<p>Wednesday, October 1 <i>US Congressional District 2 Candidates' Forum</i> Time: 5-7 p.m. Location: Bangor Area Homeless Shelter</p>	<p>Friday, October 10 <i>US Congressional District 1 Candidates' Forum</i> Time: 9-11 a.m. Location: Preble Street Resource Center Soup Kitchen</p>
<p>Tuesday, October 7 <i>Candidates' Forum with Eliot Cutler</i> Time: 9-10:15 a.m. Location: Preble Street Resource Center Soup Kitchen</p>	<p>Wednesday, October 15 <i>DHHS Rally</i> Time: 10-11 a.m. Location: DHHS offices on Marginal Way</p>
<p>Thursday, October 9 <i>Brunswick Legislative Candidates' Forum</i> Time: 6:30-8 p.m. Location: Tedford Adult Shelter</p>	<p>Tuesday, October 21 <i>Portland City Council Candidates' Forum</i> Time: 9-11 a.m. Location: Preble Street Resource Center Soup Kitchen</p>

In Remembrance of Marcia Frank



Marcia was a beloved advocate, friend, mother, proud Navy veteran, and human being. We are extremely saddened by her passing, but will carry her passion and dedication to the cause with us. She will be greatly missed.

Rest in peace, Marcia.

Marcia Frank
Former HVJ advocate

In Memorium

HVJ would also like to honor the lives of the following members who have passed away this year.



- Sam Akins
- Holly Bartlett
- Paulette Brannon
- Kenny Emerton
- Phil Fowler
- Frank Frost
- Jeremy Hixon
- Nyla Howard
- Ghanabu McCoy
- Brandi McLean
- Patrick McKinnie
- Brian O'Hearn
- Mike True



MHLP (Continued from Page 1)

Pine Tree Legal helps a lot of people, but because of their limited resources, are not able to help everyone who seeks them out. The MHLP is great for this very reason. So far, they are off to a great start! Since it began in April, they have served nearly 50 members. The clinic is also hoping to eventually work with people who are referred by other agencies. We will keep you posted.

Any member at Preble Street interested in meeting with a lawyer must first be referred by their case worker. If you would like to reach the MHLP, please call 207-956-6577.

Please visit
mainehomelesslegalproject.wordpress.com
for more information!

Leg. Update (Continued from Page 1)

he couldn't give 70,000 "able-bodied" Mainers health care.

this on behalf of those like me, some who are worse off than I am.

And unfortunately, the House and Senate didn't get enough votes to override the Governor's veto. Accepting the federal funds to expand MaineCare would have saved the lives of so many people—nearly 70,000 Mainers including myself. Now there are 70,000 people without health care who will most likely continue to use emergency rooms more often because they do not have a primary care physician.

Although the MaineCare fight didn't go our way this time, there are many good things that happened this past session. HVJ testified against a number of bills that would have significantly cut General Assistance (GA) and Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF). HVJ's testimony helped legislators see the negative impact these bills would have had on our community. As a result of our hard work, in addition to the help from our partners, none of these bills passed! There are a few other bills that passed this year which will help members of our community. LD 1751, "An Act To Provide Property Tax Relief to Maine Residents," increases the amount of money that people can get back through the Property Tax Fairness Act, which is the old "Circuit Breaker" program. And LD 1686, "An Act To Address Preventable Deaths from Drug Overdose," will save lives by increasing access to the medication Narcan. Now fire and police departments, in addition to the family and health care providers of people at risk of opioid overdose, will be able to possess and administer this medication with the proper training.

dee, another HVJ advocate, has MaineCare. Her MaineCare covers two mental health providers, who she sees each at least once a week, as well as a primary care doctor, a heart doctor, and her three scripts with a minimal co-pay. "I'm so thankful I have health care. If I didn't, I wouldn't be as stable," dee said. But I, on the other hand, no longer have MaineCare and am struggling. My health is worsening. I have a lot of health care issues. I have diabetes, high blood pressure, pancreatitis, asthma, and I need to have surgery on my ankle. I went to the State House many times and spoke on the importance of MaineCare. I not only did this for myself, by I did

Upcoming Events

HVJ is keeping pretty busy these days, so I'm here to let you all know what we have coming up...

DHHS Rally

Every month from 10-11 a.m., HVJ heads down to DHHS on Marginal Way to express our concerns over the State's decision to move these offices to South Portland. When people utilize services such as DHHS, it's likely that their lives are already difficult enough. Moving these offices to South Portland will just create even more barriers. We hope you join us to spread the message - Keep DHHS local and accessible.

Dates of upcoming rallies:

Wednesday, September 17*

Wednesday, October 15

Wednesday, November 19

Time: 10-11 a.m.

Location: DHHS, 161 Marginal Way, Portland

***September's co-sponsor - Amistad**

You Don't Need a Home to Vote

It's that time of year again! We're registering voters and holding candidates' forums! This is our 20th year of running this campaign, and it's going to be bigger than ever! We'll be holding 12 forums this fall, so make sure to check out when and where the candidates running for office will be. We hope you join us to learn more about the candidates and ask questions about issues that affect you. Make sure to check postings at all Preble Street locations as more forums become confirmed.



By: Mary Jo Skofield

Portland Candidates' Forums

All Portland forums will be held in the Preble Street Resource Center Soup Kitchen from 9-11 a.m.

*Unless otherwise specified

Tuesday, September 23

Candidates running for the Maine State Legislature

Thursday, September 25

Mike Michaud, Candidate for Governor

Tuesday, October 7

Eliot Cutler, Candidate for Governor

*Being held between 9-10:15 a.m.

Friday, October 10

Candidates running for US Congress, District 1

Tuesday, October 21

Candidates running for Portland City Council

Augusta Legislative Candidates' Forum

Date: Tuesday, September 16

Time: 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Location: LINC Wellness and Recovery Center, 38 Memorial Drive (at the corner of Gage Street)

Lewiston Legislative Candidates' Forum

Date: Thursday, September 18

Time: 3-4:30 p.m.

Location: 100 Pine Street Wellness and Recovery Center, 100 Pine Street

US Congressional District 2 Forum

Date: Wednesday, October 1

Time: 5-7 p.m.

Location: Bangor Area Homeless Shelter, 263 Main Street

Brunswick Legislative Candidates' Forum

Date: Thursday, October 9

Time: 6:30-8 p.m.

Location: Tedford Adult Shelter, 49 Cumberland Street

Note: Press will be invited to attend all forums

Meet Jeff!

My name is Jeff Vane and I'm one of the new advocates with HVJ. I've been an advocate since December and I'm liking it very much. I was homeless a couple years ago, but am now living in a great apartment and feel it is time for me to give back to the community.

The team does a lot of work around issues that affect us all. There are others chapters we visit throughout the state, including Augusta, Brunswick, and Lewiston. We also go to the State House a lot to testify on important bills. It is extremely rewarding being an advocate and I hope to make a difference in our community.

Jeff



Advocate Jeff Vane at one of our monthly DHHS rallies.

Meet Judy!

My name is Judy Newell and I'm an advocate with HVJ. I've dedicated myself to working on actions that involve issues surrounding homelessness and poverty. Life has definitely become hectic, but at the same time it is very enjoyable.

Being active and involved in HVJ actions have been eye-opening. It's taught me a lot and I've become appreciative of the little things in life that we often take for granted. I'm very grateful for this work. There are times when my daily life now seems overwhelming, but I feel the work I'm doing is very rewarding and meaningful.

Judy



Judy, center, with other advocates Jim Devine (L) and Jeff Vane (R) at the State House in Augusta.