



## THE TORRES SHELTER

# Porch Light

2009 SPRING

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### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sheryl McWatters, Chairperson  
 Diane Slater, Vice Chairperson  
 John Schleh, Treasurer  
 Patrick Conklin, Secretary  
 Philip Persson  
 Mike Deems  
 Karen Betenbaugh

### SHELTER OFFICE

101 Silver Dollar Way, Chico, CA 95928  
 Hours: 12:00 - 5:00 PM  
 Monday - Friday  
 Phone: (530) 891-9048  
 Fax: (530) 891-9084  
[www.chicoshelter.org](http://www.chicoshelter.org)

### JOB ANNOUNCEMENT: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

CCSP is seeking a highly effective and motivated Executive Director to oversee the operation of the Torres Shelter. For a job description and application, please visit our website at [www.chicoshelter.org](http://www.chicoshelter.org). Salary Negotiable. Tentative hire date: May 18, 2009.

## THE NEWS FROM TORRES SHELTER...

*Friends of the Shelter came to the rescue* late last year following the unexpected loss of our federal funding. In a truly heroic "Shelter Our Neighbors" effort, donors put together funds to match a \$50,000 donation from an anonymous individual. This allowed us to continue to operate fully without disrupting any of the many services we provide to the homeless. We cannot begin to thank you and our generous, anonymous sponsor.

*Another year-end success* was the Christmas Tree Auction and Holiday Festival, thanks to corporate sponsors and the many people who purchased decorated Christmas trees and silent auction items. Once again, our gratitude to all.

*Volunteerism at the Shelter is growing fast*, with many new volunteers providing help in a variety of ways. These heroes play an increasingly vital role in light of the budget limitations on our Shelter staff's work hours. Our volunteers truly care about the plight of the homeless and the quality of life in our community. They have come to us from Butte College, Cal State Chico, and all over this community. We'll be happy to welcome you as a volunteer, too.

*Happy to say, Torres Shelter is financially sound* this fiscal year. But uncertain times are ahead, and we cannot continue to rely on governmental funds. We must enlarge our family of private donors who are passionate about life in this community and the work we're doing to make it better. Building our new "People Helping People" program to 2,500 people steadily giving just \$10 a month — the cost of a couple of cups of designer coffee — will cover our monthly operating costs.

*We're doing great things together* and making a big difference in people's lives. Thanks so much for your continued support of our efforts. Come see us at the Shelter, and please stay in touch by checking our website at [www.chicoshelter.org](http://www.chicoshelter.org).

## LOOKING CLOSER

### *A New Torres Shelter Volunteer's Experience During the Homeless Census Count*

Up until recently, the majority of my experience with “the homeless” was from being approached by panhandlers, where I’d hand over some change then walk away as quickly as possible. But I always felt bad, and when the opportunity came up to help with the Homeless Census Count, it felt like something I should do. The Homeless Census is conducted each January by volunteers across the country. This census is required by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which makes grants available for programs that address homelessness.

On the day of the census, it was bright and *cold*. We collected our Census packets and headed to the park. I was nervous and wary, and fearful, actually. Who were these homeless people I was looking for? Did I need to fear for my safety? What would I say to them?

At first we didn’t find any homeless people, but we did find evidence of camps under the bridges and along the creeks, and I felt so sad looking at cardboard beds. As the day warmed, we began finding people to survey. What I quickly found that day was that the homeless people we met were friendly, and respectful. In one area eight or ten people gathered together just hanging out and passing the time. As we surveyed this group of people, one of them pointed to a man at another table and said “Don’t forget to talk to him. He needs help too.” There it was in plain sight...what it means to be human, and I was ashamed I hadn’t looked closer before. Here was someone that was so down and out yet he wanted to make sure that a friend was cared for too. I looked at him with respect and smiled.

My experiences that day were vastly different from what I had expected. I found myself wanting to spend more time with these people who were living on the edge. I wanted to know their story. They were not scary or intimidating. They were people just like me, just like my kids. And they needed help. And I’d find a way.

#### ***We are very excited about People Helping People!***

Here are four different ways you can join our support team:

1) You can send us a monthly check—if you use online bill paying it’s even easier because many banks will mail the check for you, or 2) donate on our website using a credit card, or 3) donate through payroll deduction if offered by your employer, or 4) sign up for an automatic donation from your account—details are on the back side of the enclosed flyer. We need you on our team!

#### ***Torres Shelter Outreach***

We’ve launched a grant-funded outreach program to reach unsheltered homeless individuals and families “on the street” to advise them of sheltering options and connect them with available safety net services. Look for more on the outreach program in our next newsletter and on our website.

# Porch Light

## VOLUNTEER AND EVENT NEWS!

**The Event Committee needs helpers!** It can be behind the scenes or hands on—the more the merrier. For information call Diane Slater at 343-4044. Lots of other volunteer opportunities are available...help us assemble newsletters, prepare dinners, or wash cars. Have special skills? We probably need them. If you are interested in helping out, call us at 891-9048.

**Super Students! Chico State Associated Students** are sponsoring a homeless awareness week including a hunger banquet on April 20th in the BMU Auditorium. Also, the **Butte College Nursing Students** are raising awareness about the shelter, as well as collecting items from our wish list. Lots of students do a lot of good in this community, and we are lucky to have their support! Watch [www.chicoshelter.org](http://www.chicoshelter.org) for upcoming information on these two events.

We are sad to report that our **"Empty Bowls"** fundraiser won't be held this year. Watch for it in 2010.

**Ali Sarsour**—Thank you *so much* for the delicious Arabic dinner you cooked for us, and thanks to all who joined us for dinner! To all our helpers and to the great musicians that made it such a fun evening—we really appreciate your support.

**Want to help?** With the state of the economy, the number of guests at the shelter continues to grow and our monthly expenses are increasing. If your group is looking for a way to help, please consider holding a fundraising event for us!

**People Helping People News Flash!** We currently have 42 wonderful people giving a total of \$830 per month. As you can see, we've almost hit our first \$1,000 but we have a long way to go to cover our expenses of \$25,000 per month. Please join our support team—no pain, but lots of gain!

## MAY 2

### 26<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL GARDEN TOUR

St John's Episcopal Church 26<sup>th</sup> Annual Garden Tour will be donating some of the proceeds of the event to many organizations in Chico including the Torres Shelter. Please join this fun event!

**Tour 11AM – 4PM:** A self guided tour featuring five gardens with map on the back of the ticket.

**Lunch served at church 11AM – 2:30PM:** A delicious main course salad, fruit, rolls and two decadent cookies, along with iced tea and coffee, a raffle of artisan goods donated by local businesses, and a boutique of flowers and floral arrangements.

**Plant Boutique at church open to ticket holders at 10:30AM:** The plant boutique offers a wide variety of potted plants and some special arrangements made by local nurseries for sale. Because they are unique, they are always very popular. With Mothers Day around the corner, they make great gifts. Also people can buy clippings of unusual plants donated by church members.

### Tickets Outlets

Tickets can be purchased at: St. John's Church Office 2341 Floral Ave; Chico Creek Gardens; Christian & Johnson; Fostine's Nursery; The Gifted Garden; Little Red Hen Gift Shop, Little Red Hen Therapeutic Plant Nursery; Mendon's Nursery; PIP Printing at 970 Mangrove; Zucchini & Vine.

### Tickets

Cost \$20 pre sale, \$25 at the door. Tickets include map to the gardens, garden descriptions and lunch at the church.



THE TORRES SHELTER

# Porch Light



Chico Community Shelter Partnership  
Torres Shelter  
101 Silver Dollar Way, Chico, CA 95928

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. Postage  
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## TORRES SHELTER DONATION WISH LIST

Donations are greatly appreciated and they don't always have to be financial donations! There are lots of items that help us stretch our budget, including those listed below, that we can hand out to our guests and also use at the shelter:

- > Blankets
- > Towels and washcloths
- > Flip flops in mostly large sizes (Dollar Store)
- > Large bottles of shampoo, conditioner, and body wash
- > Disposable razors
- > Deodorant (men's and women's)
- > Printer paper
- > 8 oz. disposable coffee cups
- > Plastic ware (forks, knives, spoons) and paper plates
- > Trash bags: 33 and 10 gallon
- > Bleach
- > Laundry detergent (liquid preferred)
- > Disinfecting solution (Pine-Sol, Simple Green, any econo-version cleaner)
- > Window cleaning products (Windex, econo-windex, etc.)

Thank you for your support!

Design donated by: [www.helendualdesign.com](http://www.helendualdesign.com)