

*“Mary and Joseph in Bethlehem without shelter.”  
“The Good Samaritan helping the beaten, robbed man.”  
These stories repeat themselves every day,  
right here on Cape Cod.  
But, you can make a difference!*

December 2006

Dear Friend,

John has happy family memories. “We enjoyed festive family holidays and fishing excursions at Nickerson State Park.” Sadly, when John’s brother (his guardian) died a few years ago, John had to leave the home he knew for 28 years. Since moving to CHAMP Homes, he has adjusted well. He likes meeting new people and now works as a dishwasher and in the CHAMP Recycling Center on West Main Street in Hyannis.

*“CHAMP Homes is very human and delightful. We live together as a family and the small staff helps us with any problems we have, whether it’s our healthcare or finding jobs.”*

It could happen to you, me or a loved one in a blink of an eye. A family member gets into an accident, is all of a sudden without a job and can’t continue to pay his bills and loses his house.

That’s what CHAMP Homes, founded in 1991, is all about. For orphans, widows, young and old, male and female; For those who need life long care to those just needing a jump start for a short stay; Homeless and in need of a safe, supportive and affordable place to call home.

My name is Paul Hebert, together with my wife Carolyn as founder and Co-Director of CHAMP Homes, I am writing to ask you for your support.

We’re the biggest supplier of supportive housing to adults in the region but we receive no government contracts. In the past 15 years we have been blessed to be able to help more than 1,000 people who graced our doorways, thanks to someone like you: caring and loving, (see the article on the back).

We’re soon opening CHAMP Home IV, the *Dacey House*, with beds for four women, but the need continues. It takes about \$40 a day to support a resident, less than many other programs in the area.

You can help keep people safe, stop their plunge into despair, turn lives around and see hope grow by faith and trust into new lives of promise and service. We need you today, because someone you love may need us tomorrow.

May you and your family have a wonderful holiday and the glow of peace for helping others. Thank you for your prayers and support.



Paul and Carolyn Hebert, Co-Directors

P.S.: You can help keep the promise to our broken brothers and sisters that we as a community will be there in times of need. Happy Holidays to you and yours. Thank you for your special gift today.

Note: In the interest of privacy we changed the name of the one in need of Champ Homes. We do not exchange or sell our mailing list. Thank you to *Type Trends* and *Midnight Mail* for donating part of this mailing.



**Housing For All Corporation**  
82 School Street, Hyannis, MA 02601  
508-771-0885 / paul@champhouse.org  
www.champhouse.org

# A House Undivided

By CYNTHIA McCORMICK  
STAFF WRITER

HYANNIS - Paul and Carolyn Hebert had no idea what they were in for when they opened CHAMP House for people at risk of homelessness in 1991.

Neither one had a degree in social work or job experience running a nonprofit organization. The Heberts were spiritually motivated, enthusiastic volunteers. But Paul was a chef by training and Carolyn worked in a school nurse's office.

Impressed by their volunteer work with the homeless at the fledgling NOAH shelter and the Day Star Program at the Salvation Army, the late philanthropist Alice O'Neil challenged the Centerville couple to start their own program by donating \$800,000 for CHAMP House.

Now celebrating its 15th anniversary, CHAMP House is going stronger than ever, the Heberts said, providing a family-like environment for people living at least temporarily on society's margins.

"This is a home," said resident M. Sam Creney, a 57-year-old woman who has lived at CHAMP House for 2-1/2 years. "They really, really care. The only motive is to help people."

The CHAMP House mission has changed since it opened in an old captain's house on Main Street in Hyannis with room for a dozen youths who needed a place to live while they finished high school or found work.

Today only a fraction of the residents are teenagers.

And the CHAMP House location has changed, occupying a veritable campus on School Street near Lewis Bay.

The main building, the Alice O'Neil CHAMP House, is a former nursing home holding 25 beds as well as the CHAMP office.

Across the street, the wooden Jamie Ready



(STAFF PHOTO BY KEVIN MINGORA)

"We don't want it to be so dependent on us it would end when our time to retire comes," Carolyn said. They opened the facility in 1991.

House has five occupants, mainly people living with the effects of head injuries. A little garden separates it from the Lyndon P. Lorusso House, which has nine occupants ages 25 to 60.

Under construction in back of the Ready House is a building that will house up to four women when it opens in 2007.

The campus includes an art studio, kitchens, a learning center, library and living rooms with TVs, a piano and treadmill. Described by Paul Hebert as a faith-based community, CHAMP House also has its own interfaith chapel. Residents run a recycling center out of a building on West Main Street.

Flexibility has been a cornerstone of the program's success, the Heberts say.

"The original mission, to serve older teens, changed very quickly," Paul Hebert said. "Today, I would describe it as an adult program open to young people if they are serious about growth.

We'll put a kid through college. We won't abandon them. We send kids off to Job Corps and we are considered their sending home."

The Heberts found that serving older teens didn't mesh with their vision of developing a stable, home-like atmosphere in a therapeutic setting - which meant no drug or alcohol use, even off campus.

CHAMP House became a revolving door as teens and young adults initially pledged to live sober lives but then rebelled against the rules.

"It was exhausting," Paul Hebert said. "Everyone that

came through took a piece of us."

And then, of course, there was the fire.

In 1996, a young resident of the original CHAMP House went to the basement to secretly huff propane. High on the gas, he lit a cigarette that caused an explosion and fire.

The young man survived, and so did CHAMP House, although not in its original incarnation.

It was a postman trying to deliver mail to the destroyed CHAMP House who mentioned the abandoned nursing home building at 82 School St.

The Heberts moved the residents in within a month. "At first, we thought it would be way too big, but we filled it up in no time," Carolyn Hebert said.

CHAMP House receives no government contracts. Its \$489,000 annual budget depends on donations, grants and the \$100 weekly contribution residents are asked to make. The fee covers the cost not only of room and board, but of laundry, house phone lines, cable TV and computer usage.

"It's meant a lot to me," said Aaron Currier, a 30-year-old graduate of Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, who has lived at CHAMP House for eight years. "It's family. I don't know where I'd be if I weren't here. They've been a second set of parents. Paul is the closest thing I ever had to a father."

Creney, who is just moving out of CHAMP House into her own rental cottage, said the Heberts provided an environment of respect and dignity when she was at a low point in her life, having lost her partner and condo.

The Heberts are developing a strategic plan so that their mission will continue even after they scale back their working hours in the next five to seven years. "We don't want it to be so dependent on us it would end when our time to retire comes," said Carolyn Hebert, 60. She and Paul, 58, have three grown daughters who live off-Cape and one grandchild.

The Heberts are planning to hire an operations office to develop the "Housing For All Corp.," their legal entity. The current staff includes an assistant director, case manager, and part-time social worker. Two residents also work for pay 10 to 15 hours a week, in addition to all the residents who volunteer at the recycling center and cooking and cleaning.

As usual, the Heberts, who are non-denominational Christians, have turned to prayer in planning for the CHAMP House future.

The Heberts say they know how easy it is for people to lose their economic footing on Cape Cod by getting sick and losing their job, parent or spouse.

"There's a lot of us who are homeless and in need," Paul Hebert said. "We're all fragile. It's so easy to go into a tailspin here."

Cynthia McCormick can be reached at [cmmccormick@capecodonline.com](mailto:cmmccormick@capecodonline.com).



(STAFF PHOTO BY PAUL BLACKMORE)

Candace Grant, K'von Grant and Adam Currier hang out together in the kitchen of CHAMP House in Hyannis. The program's original mission - providing a stable home for teenagers - has transformed into a place that offers support for adults who are at low points in their lives.

## Reply Form

- My check, payable to CHAMP Homes, is enclosed, or
- I would like to charge my gift: (see reverse side)



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Hyannis, MA 02601  
508-771-0885  
www.champhouse.org

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Please make check payable to CHAMP Homes.  
Your gift is tax deductible.

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**Thank you and God bless!**

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Please make any corrections if needed.

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- I would like to receive more information about leaving CHAMP Homes in my will.  
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 Please send me email updates: \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

**Our Mission:**

*To provide and maintain a safe, therapeutic and nurturing family-type environment for homeless youth and adults.  
To offer education, career, and life skills training. To continuously advocate for the neglected and abandoned people of our community.*  
Please call to learn more about us and to discuss how you can remember the Housing For All Corporation in your will and the tax saving benefits of Charitable Remainder Trusts and Annuities, 508-771-0885.

For information about recycling and upcoming events, please check out our web site at [www.champhouse.org](http://www.champhouse.org)

CHAMP Homes is a program of the Housing For All Corporation (HFAC), a charitable 501(c)3 tax-deductible organization, registered with the Massachusetts Attorney General's Office (Account # 23602). Thank you for caring.

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