Disability or Social Security might not be enough

When thinking about homelessness, senior citizens don’t immediately come to mind. Sadly, the number of homeless seniors is on the rise. At the family shelter we are currently serving eight single women over the age of 62.

One such client is Alisa. Alisa has been more than self-sufficient after working for a hospital in San Jose for over 15 years. Upon suffering poor health which disabled her, she was no longer able to work and had to leave her job. She could no longer afford the $1,700 house rent on her disability payment of $1,206 per month, so she located a room for rent for $750. This lasted several months until the person who was renting to her found a tenant who would pay much more, and asked Alisa to move out.

Unable to locate affordable housing in San Jose where she had lived her whole life, she came to Stockton where housing is cheaper.

While at the Shelter, Alisa has been able to “take a breath” and plan her new life. She put in an application for a safe, affordable place to live and is anxious to start her new journey. Alisa knows life is going to be different, but manageable - and with the support of new friends - happy.

Neither Alisa, nor the other seven ladies currently here ever expected to be homeless in their senior years. We averaged 34 single women per night last month. The good news is that we help them get back on their feet and into permanent housing situations.

Seniors joining the ranks of the homeless in droves

This past year the increase in seniors looking for emergency shelter was startling as well as troubling. We had 73 senior women and 331 senior men seeking our help.

We started seeing this uptick in 2008 and thought it would level off as the “Great Recession” faded into the past. Apparently not! Retirees who do not have a sizeable “nest egg” will be returning to the workforce to make ends meet (if they can work). Those who can’t will be leaning on family members for support—if they have that option. As a 62-year-old myself, I know how excessively quick “retirement” approaches in the rear view mirror. Imagine though if you will, how your “apple-cart plans” for retirement can suddenly be overturned by ill health or injury. It is happening more and disability payments will not “right the cart!”

24% of the single men we serve and 14% of the single women are older, less financially secure, and less likely to find that part-time job they desperately need. Something shelter directors and staff must consider in future planning and something an informed community might want to know so that action can be taken.
Members of Little Flock Baptist Church provided a bar-b-que lunch, entertainment and a clothing give-away for the entire shelter.

A special THANK YOU to Randy Coen of Envirotech for donating and installing pallet racks at the new Shelter Thrift Store. We appreciate the hard work of Justin Spicer and Manual Rochin who helped erect the racking at the store. Envirotech also donated office desks and bookshelves to the Shelter. It’s this type of in-kind donation and volunteer activity that keeps us in business! We can’t do what we do without the solid support of the community. We are so grateful.

TEN WAYS YOU CAN HELP BY SHARING YOUR TIME, TALENT or TREASURE...
1. MAKE A CONTRIBUTION monthly or otherwise
2. SHOP AT SHELTER THRIFT
3. DONATE new or slightly used items
4. REMEMBER A LOVED ONE with a charitable gift
5. MAKE A BEQUEST in your will—there are tax breaks!
6. ASK YOUR CHURCH or civic organization to place the shelter needs list in their newsletter
7. LEAVE A LEGACY. Contribute to the Endowment Fund ($1,000 or more)
8. VOLUNTEER—There are many individual and group projects which would suit your talents
9. ADOPT-A-ROOM: do a make-over of a family room (new flooring, paint, fixtures & bedding)
10. TOUR THE SHELTER and give us your feedback

We are grateful to all our wonderful volunteers and supporters. We could not serve the homeless without you. Throughout the year we have hundreds of men, women, and young people volunteering and sharing at the Shelter and we can always use more! The following are just a few of the wonderful people and organizations who continue to get involved and help us out here at the shelter.

- Aeropostale - games and toys for kids
- Children’s Museum of Stockton - passes for summer activities
- Delta PSI - annual clothing drive and dinner
- First Congregational Church - adopted the Shelter for “Faith in Project”
- Pacific Law Academy Hmong Club - crafts with kids
- St. Andrews Presbyterian-Redondo Beach - concert and food
- Tina Banford - monthly crafts with women
- UOP Academy of Pharmacist - proceeds from dunk tank at spring picnic
- UOP Center for Community Involvement - weekly arts & crafts with kids
- UOP Theta Chi - painted family room
- Victory in Praise Church - Mother’s Day “pampering”

If you are interested in volunteering at the Shelter, contact Katie, our Volunteer Coordinator at 465-3612

Cosmetology students from Hollywood Beauty College gave hair cuts, manicures and make-overs at the family shelter.
During the recent record setting heat wave, temperatures were the hottest they have been since 2006. On extremely hot days such as these, Shelter Staff and volunteers drive around and pass out cold water and juice to the unsheltered homeless and migrant workers. During this recent heat wave we passed out over 300 bottles and we opened the Drop-in Center and the Multi Purpose room as “cooling centers”.

**Akshara Bangalore** and **Shaila Emani** celebrated Baratanatyam Arangetram (Indian classical dance graduation). Through this celebration the young ladies wanted to make a positive impact. They requested that guests at the graduation honor them by donating to Stockton Shelter for the Homeless. This noble and notable gesture raised over $6,000 for the Shelter! With great appreciation we thank these two young women for their kindness and compassion for those less fortunate.

Akshara and Shaila delivered their gift to the Shelter and took a tour with their mothers. They met with Board member, Karen Moran, Board President, Toni Taboada and CEO John Reynolds.

**Claudia Richardson** (below) Retired after 15 years as program manager of the shelter’s HIV/AIDS Shelter Program. We appreciate her outstanding sensitivities, talents and abilities which enabled her to relate to the needs of homeless clients who are living with HIV/AIDS. This special program utilizes six residences for families and one five bedroom home for 12 single adults. We wish Claudia good health and all the best in her retirement years. She deserves that and so much more!

**Shelter Thrift & Donation Centers**  
“Where the entire community can help the homeless”  
7540 Pacific Avenue at Hammer Ranch Center  
1242 W. Fremont Street  
1 block east of Pershing Avenue  
20% off one entire purchase  
* not valid with any other offer *  
Coupon expires August 31, 2013
Shelter Wish List

FOR THE THRIFT STORES

- Formal and Prom Dresses
- Jewelry, Purses and Shoes
- Women’s Clothing
- Men’s Clothing
- Children’s Clothing
- Home Décor
- Kitchen Utensils
- Furniture
- Books, CDs, and DVDs

FOR THE FAMILY SHELTER

- Back packs
- New Sleeping Bags
- Reading Glasses
- Toilet paper
- Diapers & Baby Wipes
- Bars of Soap
- Financial Assistance

MAJOR PROJECTS & COSTS

- Room Remodeling (adopt-a-room) - $2,000 ea.
- Computer, Monitor & Printer - $800
- Linoleum flooring for the Drop-In Center
- Paint and Volunteers to paint the Family Shelter

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Toni Taboada – President
- Darlene Canepa – Vice President
- Charles Keen, Jr. – Treasurer
- Kitty Ruhstaller – Secretary
- Mary Aguirre
- Emily Ballus
- Eric Holman
- Angel Jimenez
- Robert Leonard
- Karen Moran
- Michael Padilla
- Radhika Rao
- Jerry Ruiz
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- Julie Watts
- J.C. Weydert
- Joan Wilholt
- Carol Zelter
- CEO – John Reynolds

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