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Green Doors is supported by the following local, state and federal agencies: Austin Housing Finance Corporation, City of Austin Health & Human Services Department, City of Austin Neighborhood Housing and Community Development, Travis County Health and Human Services & Veteran Services, Texas Department of Housing & Community Affairs, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

The generous donors listed above provided financial and in-kind gifts to Green Doors between August 1, 2008 and July 20, 2009. If we have inadvertently omitted your name, please contact us at 469-9130.

FEEDBACK

To be added or removed from our mailing list, or to update your contact information, contact Cynthia at 512.469.9130 or cwilliams@greendoors.org



THE COMMUNITY VOICE

Vol. 5, No. 1, Summer 2009 • www.GreenDoors.org

“I grew up in a family of five siblings,” said John, a formerly homeless veteran now participating in Green Doors’ Veterans Re-Entry program. “My mother taught me compassion, and my father taught me discipline and how to do things.”

John has called upon this compassion and discipline throughout his life, first in the US Army, and then as a security guard and probation officer. He found himself homeless for a time after he started having cluster headaches due to stress and had to leave his job in Los Angeles.

John joined the Army in 1981, and spent two years in Germany and two years at Fort Hood. His overseas job with the military was as an M1 Tank Mechanic with the Third Infantry Division stationed in Augsburg, West Germany. While there, he pulled border guard duty at times, directly across from the Russian base on the other side of the German border.

While at Fort Hood, John was an M1 Tank Mechanic for the First Calvary Division. His mechanic training was accomplished at Ft. Knox in Kentucky.

RESIDENT SUCCESS STORY

After his honorable discharge, John moved to California and first pursued a career in studio security. As a security guard for several movie studios over the years, he met all types of people involved in the film industry. The film lots where he worked were involved in filming TV shows, commercials and movies. John was part of the security detail for movies such as, “Heat,” “Get Shorty,” “Multiplicity,” and the TV series “Arliiss.” He even had a small role in the Partridge Family movie “Come On, Get Happy,” and was body guard for David Cassidy.

John then transitioned to a public service career, working as a crew instructor for the Los Angeles County Probation Department. He worked with minors and adults who had committed minor infractions and misdemeanors, instructing and overseeing projects through the public works department. John’s charges did laundry, weeded public gardens and painted public structures. He is justifiably proud that very few of those probationers repeated their crimes after their judicial dismissal.

After being diagnosed with cluster headaches, and giving up smoking, caffeine and chocolate in an effort to alleviate the pain,

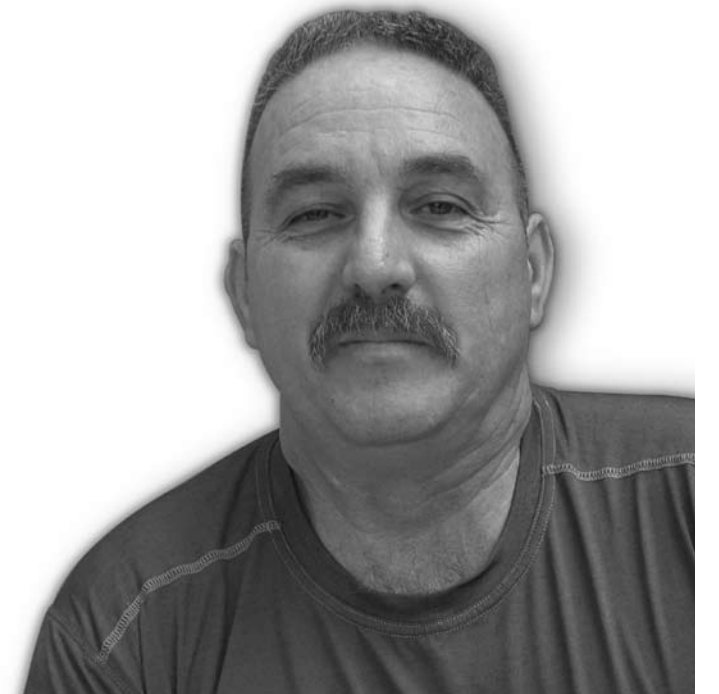
John had to leave his job with LA County. He decided to move to Austin where his brother and grandchildren live. John lived for a time at the Salvation Army as he was trying to get a job and get back on track. At the Salvation Army, he met with a case manager who told him about the Veterans Re-Entry program.

John applied to and was accepted into the program. Having a safe, secure home and permanent address and phone was an advantage during John’s job search. He lived in one of the houses that Green Doors has for veterans who are working toward regaining their independence. In April he secured a job with Travis County as a residential treatment officer. John is now preparing to exit from the Re-Entry program, and is looking for a home to purchase with a VA loan.

“The Re-Entry program was there when I needed it,” said John. I never relied on anyone before and consider myself very self-reliant. It was difficult to ask for help, but you shouldn’t hesitate to do so. In addition to providing me with a home, the staff at Green Doors gave me hope for the future.”

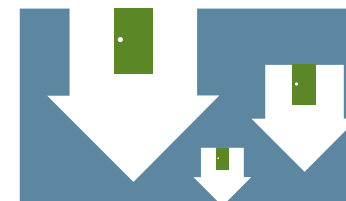
John is now working full time and house hunting in Austin. We are proud of the many veterans like John who enter the program, make good use of the resources available, and then transition to a more secure and independent life.

In this article the resident’s name has been changed to protect privacy.



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WHAT’S INSIDE?

Letter from Executive Director Frank Fernandez

Volunteer Highlights

Wishlist

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Many exciting things have happened since I penned my last letter. We've changed our name. Launched a homeless education outreach campaign. And started rehabilitation on our latest affordable housing project. Green Doors is growing.



Why Green Doors?

Our new identity, Green Doors, is grounded in who we are and what we do. It is a symbol rooted in the history of individuals struggling with homelessness. During the Great Depression, men and women were forced to ride train cars across the country because they had no home and little opportunity. These hobos, as they were called, would stop in different towns, looking for work. Many encountered hostility and alienation. Yet, not all people treated them badly. Some individuals and families would open up their homes and provide these folks with a safe place to stay and treat them with human dignity. One symbol used to let the train riders know that they had a safe place to stay was a green door. Men and women, brothers and sisters, friends and colleagues would paint their doors green to signal that they were willing to provide a safe haven for the less fortunate. Green Doors.

Tex S. Taxpayer Series

In late May – with the help of 85 dedicated volunteers – Green Doors launched the Tex S. Taxpayer Series, a homelessness education outreach campaign. Its purpose is to move the public, the Tex S. Taxpayer, (you, me, all of us), to take constructive action on the issue of homelessness. Green Doors has created a series of video shorts that illustrate how individuals and families end up homeless and demonstrate the price we all pay if we do not adequately address the issue.

The first video short, a powerful 30-second piece featuring the voice of Austin music icon Ray Benson, focuses on helping us better understand why so many veterans end up homeless. It also provides at the end of the video several ways that each of us can take action to get veterans off the streets of Austin – to watch video visit www.greendoors.org. The next video, focused on family homelessness, will be released at the beginning of the new school year in the fall.

Pecan Springs Commons

Green Doors has begun rehabilitation on the first phase of its newest project, Pecan Springs Commons – a 70-unit acquisition/rehab project targeted to working poor families and individuals in the Pecan Springs neighborhood in Northeast Austin. We are very excited by the potential of this project to serve not only in providing affordable, safe, quality housing, but also as a catalyst for reducing crime in the neighborhood and rebuilding community. Indeed, in the 15 month period prior to Green Doors operating the 8 properties being rehabilitated, there were 925 incidents reported to the police in this one neighborhood block. So, on average, the police were getting to 2 to 3 9-1-1 calls per day from people on this block reporting disturbances and illegal activity – assault, domestic violence, prostitution, rape drug activity, etc. We are thrilled to be collaborating with the Pecan Springs neighborhood association, APD, and other partners on the project. Only together will we be able to transform this neighborhood block.

GREEN DOORS VISION & MISSION

Our Vision: One day, all Central Texas families and individuals will have the opportunity to live in affordable, safe, quality housing.

Our Mission: Green Doors' mission is to prevent and help end homelessness and poverty housing for those working to achieve independent living in Central Texas. Green Doors accomplishes this by: creating affordable, safe, quality housing; providing residents with access to supportive services; and educating about, and advocating for, individuals and families struggling with homelessness and at-risk for homelessness.

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CONTACT US

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THANK YOU TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

GLEN OAKS FURNITURE BUILD OCTOBER 2008 ➔

Edward Tull, Casey Kasper, Kristina Machell, Christian Brown, Trace Hayles, Evan Sauer, Eli Garza, Matt Jones, Kyle Strickland, Christopher Green, Jared Hill

GLEN OAKS CORNER TREE PLANTING NOVEMBER 2008

Andy Barllay, Joseph Brentlinger, Aaron Burkin, Adam Burkin, Michelle Dazo, Casey Kasper, Josh Korinek, Jonathan Miller, Sharee Miller, Casey Morgan, Allison Preslar, Evan Sauer, Edward Tull, Ryan Verheyen

GLEN OAKS CORNER FURNITURE BUILD FEBRUARY 2009

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COMMUNITY GARDENING DAY MARCH 2009

Jennifer Bell, Michelle Bell, Vinay Bhat, Christine Braselton, Brent Bulger, Aaron Burkin, Adam Burkin, Victoria Cano-Calhoun, Matthew Carlson, Catherine Cramer, Diana DeGrate, Samantha Dutton, Ashley Elder, Shinetin Feng Felix Flores, Barry Forrest, Michael Frizzell, Zachary Gray, Kurt Green, Mindy Green, Kate Grossman, James Hammond, Susannah Hansen, Jared Hill, Sam Johnston, Matthew Jones, Sarah Jordan, Melissa Kwan, Henry Le, Maren Lujan, Joseph Martini, Kristy Mckinney, Raquel Molina, Sarah Ng, Teresa Nguyen, Kimberly Norman, Tammy Parker, David Perez, Sam Peterson, Matthew Rao, Anthony Robinson, T.J. Robinson- Johnathon Rose, Andrea Rother, Juan Saenz, Jacob Sims, Marya Sokha -Rick Swan, Tam Tran, Ben Vial, Rachel Wellman, Dan Westfall, Emily Whitley, Bradford Wilson, Chris Woldstad, Christopher Wu, David Zelinsky

FOOD PANTRY 2008-09

Hilda Mikan, Mike Mikan, Bo Boatright, Ryan Verheyen, David Bobb

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHTS: How You Can Help

Without the “person-power” of our many dedicated volunteers, Green Doors would be unable to do the many tasks involved with providing quality services for our residents. Volunteers can help out in many ways: we have one-time assignments for property-clean-up, painting and landscaping, and have regularly-scheduled volunteer opportunities to help with food and supplies delivery and distribution, and office assistance.

We encourage team-building projects, and have had many successful projects that have “adopted” residents for the holidays, helped with gardening and landscaping projects, and provided onsite support at events.

Contact Greg Esparza at gesparza@greendoors.org or 469-9130 to discuss current projects.



MAKE OUR WISHLIST COME TRUE

Green Doors accepts both financial and material contributions that directly benefit its residents. If you wish to contribute items listed below, please contact us for delivery arrangements.

Our residents are always in need of:

- Men, women and children's new socks, underwear and undershirts
- New or gently used patio furniture
- Gardening hand tools – both adult and child
- Gift cards: WalMart, Target, Lowe's

To volunteer or make an in-kind donation, contact Greg Esparza at 469-9130 or gesparza@greendoors.org.

Financial donations can be made via our website at www.greendoors.org or mailed to:

PO Box 685065, Austin, TX 78768

IN MEMORIAM: We are saddened at the loss of one of the residents of the Veterans Re-Entry program. Robert Stephenson, a veteran of World War II died on May 21. Our thoughts and prayers are with Robert's family and friends. Our staff and his fellow residents miss him daily.