

NEOCH's Mission

To organize and empower homeless and at risk men, women and children to break the cycle of poverty through public education, advocacy and the creation of nurturing environments

NEOCH
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Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless

2004 Annual Report



The Ruins of Camelot

by Pete Dell

4th Annual Dinner & Auction

- 6:30 Mingle and Browse Items
- 6:45 Welcome
Tom Feran--Cleveland Plain Dealer
- 7:00 Dinner
- 7:30 Street Voices Presentation
- 8:00 A Look Back at NEOCH in 2004
Teri D. Horne
- 8:10 Break to browse the items
- 8:20 A Look Forward at NEOCH in 2005
Brian Davis
- 8:30 Award Presentation
Kelly Burd & Carmine Burkette
- 8:45 Raffle Drawing
- 9:00 Announcement of Raffle Winners
Kim Kilpatrick & Denise Sobieski
- 9:20 Acknowledgements
Johanna Keenan & Meg Madrigal Wilson
- 9:30 Closing
Tom Feran--Cleveland Plain Dealer

On the front cover...

Camelot was a large abandoned bakery occupied by homeless people for years. In 2000, the City of Cleveland forcibly took back Camelot after a stand off with homeless people. Photographer Pete Dell has kept a photo retrospective of the destruction of Camelot.



choose to act
choose to care
choose to speak out
choose to help
choose to teach
choose to give
choose to participate



Community Shares supports 36 local nonprofit organizations working on social justice issues. To find out how you can support Community Shares, visit www.communityshares.org or call 216.361.9920.

choose to make a difference



Jim C. Smith, C.P.G.
President

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Special Events Committee

Thanks to all the individuals who worked hard, volunteering their time and talent, to make the 2005 annual event, "Home Forever" a great success.

Johanna Keenan, Chair
Maggie Keenan
Kim Kilpatrick
Summer Paris
Denise Sobieski
Meg Wilson
Teri' D. Horne, Staff Liaison

Special thanks to the Jazz Collective for performing at the NEOCH Annual Meeting.

Thanks to Summer Paris for her tireless work on the NEOCH Annual Report 2004.

Special Thanks to Tom Feran for his hosting of the NEOCH Annual Meeting on May 13, 2005.

A New Beatitude

by Daniel Thompson

Waking to starlight
In a dark season
I hear a new beatitude, America
Listen
Blessed are the homeless
For they shall inherit the street
The sidewalk, the bushes
The cold, cold ground
Whatever falls from heaven
Pennies of rain, of snow
Any spare change of weather
Day-old manna
The donut and the hole
In the donut, the hole in the sock
In the sole of the shoe
And in the cold, cold ground
And O I almost forgot, America
This, too, from you
The cold eye of the stranger...



Board President's Reflection

Dear Advocates:

After ten years of working with homeless people and four years as the Board President, I am stepping down as President. I will remain on the Board but turn over the Presidency to someone else. I leave this office with the knowledge that NEOCH has accomplished many of our goals except the most important one: a reduction in homelessness. The agency has expanded to meet the needs of people experiencing homelessness. After lobbying for a plan to address the affordable housing crisis locally, the City and County are both sitting at the same table to move this agenda forward.

We stabilized the Bridging the Gap program and housed over 60 people last year. BTG also has worked with 211/First Call for Help to introduce an affordable housing database that will be available soon. We were able to publish the *Homeless Grapevine* paper over the last 11 years creating controversy and a venue for homeless people to speak to the general community. We talked to a record number of people looking for advice or assistance with legal problems. While we downsized the Cleveland Community Voice Mail program at the beginning of the year, we added two AmeriCorps members to the effort by the end of the year. NEOCH staff members were instrumental in getting the Community Hiring Hall off the ground and working for fair treatment within the shelter system.

We are still working to stabilize the organization and find consistent funding. I feel especially proud of the Community Voice Mail program. I joined the board when Voice Mail was just beginning with only 200 boxes. Now we have over 2,000 boxes in both Lorain and Cuyahoga Counties. The stories of people finding relatives that they lost or finally obtaining employment because they are able to receive messages are inspiring. Voice mail clients are always among the most thankful that NEOCH serves, even when they don't realize that Community Voice Mail is a NEOCH program.

I joined the Board because of my interest in preserving and protecting the rights of homeless people. I was attracted to the passion and vociferous defense of homeless individuals. The willingness to take on the City, County, religious institutions, and providers is what makes NEOCH so unique. I am so proud of the advocacy work of the Coalition. The work on Bringing America Home at the national level and forcing the national retailers to stop selling hate videos last year were some highlights of 2004.

The next year is a chance to put in place a real plan to address the affordable housing crisis. We will continue to work on updating the Street Card and staging a yearly Homeless Stand Down. We will continue our work to assure that homeless people receive fair treatment and are not targeted for harassment or overly aggressive law enforcement. We will work on housing, civil rights, health care, and economic justice issues in 2005. Most importantly, we will follow the directions of our constituency. We will respond to those in need of housing, shelter, a job, or those who just need someone who will listen. We have put an agency strategic plan in place, as you'll read about in this report, but we all understand that we need to be responsive to the homeless population.

Sincerely,
Roy C. Love

NEOCH's Programs - 2004 Overview

AmeriCorps National Service

In 2004, NEOCH had five AmeriCorps*VISTA members in Cleveland and our lead VISTA was able to recruit six members statewide. However, we learned that NEOCH was one of the programs that would be cut and we would lose our statewide program. Although many supporters wrote letters in our defense to keep the NEOCH program, we were unsuccessful. NEOCH worked with other Coalitions around the state and applied for VISTA members through the Cincinnati Coalition. Over the past 10 years VISTA members have been responsible for the creation of many programs, including BTG, CHLAP, CCVM, Community Hiring Hall, Eyeglass Program, Street Voices Speakers Bureau, and staging a massive art show. In 2003, members coordinated the creation of an identification program that will allow homeless individuals to get birth certificates, state ID etc. They are also working on creating a stable women's resident committee similar to the men's shelter committee, as well creating a ranking system for the local shelters.

In 2003, NEOCH applied to the Corporation for National Service to receive AmeriCorps members. AmeriCorps members are different than VISTA in many ways, as they are able to do direct service work and they have the option of going to school or working while they are completing 1,700 hours of NEOCH work. In 2004, we were successfully able to bring on a group of eight dynamic and diverse AmeriCorps members. Members are currently working to sustain the *Homeless Grapevine* newspaper, ensure maximum use of community voice mail, house clients and provide follow up services through Bridging the Gap, and create a volunteer program for the entire organization.

Bridging the Gap (BTG)

BTG is finally back on track after a couple of rough years. We have successfully expanded our program to include housing placements in Project Based Section 8 housing as well as private landlords and recovery facilities. We were also successful in securing funds to staff the program in 2004. In 2004, BTG had a professional team that included a program director, a housing placement manager, a VISTA member and four AmeriCorps members. BTG housed 70 individuals and assisted 24 of the individuals by providing furniture and other household goods. In 2004, over 300 individuals attended BTG's Life Skills classes. BTG also took the lead on the collaboration of the first ever city-wide housing database, HousingCleveland.com. This new database will launch in 2005. Finally, BTG increased its number of partner agencies to 33.

Cleveland Homeless Legal Assistance Program (CHLAP)

CHLAP served over 500 individuals who needed legal advice in 2004 and our partnership with the Cleveland Bar Association is great. Volunteer attorneys staffed eight intake sites in 2004 by adding two additional sites. Staff plan to add three more sites in 2005. CHLAP continues to struggle in its effort to gain financial support from the legal community; however, through the work of the Bar Association we have been successful in recruiting volunteer attorneys to staff the intake sites. In 2004, we hosted forums to educate partner agencies on legal issues. CHLAP also worked to create a partnership with third year law students to give them experience providing legal assistance to the program's client base.

Reflections from Friends & Family

"Brian Davis was not what I expected an executive director to be. He is down to earth, passionate about the people he's working to help, and he lives a life that is dedicated to this work. I learned about compassion and empathy from Brian. I learned how to see the people we are working with as just that - people, just like you or me. I learned more from my year at NEOCH than I ever have and I hope the work is able to continue for another 10 years!"
-Lindsay Friedrich, VISTA alumnus

"Brian has two characteristics which I admire greatly: (a) he cares as much as anyone I know about both knowing and doing something about the best interests of the poor, and (b) his fund of knowledge about a wide range of social justice issues both locally and nationally is exceptional. There is nobody who I trust more as a source of information."
-Thomas G. Pretlow, M.D., NEOCH Board of Trustees

"Brian Davis is a true homeless advocate. He embodies the best traditions of the homeless movement and grassroots activism, firmly grounding all of his actions in the homeless voice and a never ending quest for justice. He is tireless, dedicated, and single minded in his mission to make Cleveland, Ohio and the United States better for people experiencing homelessness. The Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless is indebted to Brian for taking the time to share his ideas and ideals, and I am proud to call him a mentor."
-Georgine Getty, Greater Cincinnati Coalition for the Homeless Executive Director

"There are three key words in real estate - location, location, location. There are three key words to describe Brian Davis - focused, focused, focused. Thanks, Brian, for reminding me that we ARE our brother's keeper! Surely, the angels hold your heart in their hands."
-Lynn Paul, current AmeriCorps member

"I was always amazed at Brian's commitment to NEOCH and to homeless people. It was a pleasure to work with someone who was an expert in the field and genuinely driven to improve conditions for those living in poverty."
-Angela Joyce, past Director of Operations and VISTA alumnus

"I will now and always remember Brian's drive and compassion for his work with the homeless population. I am honored to say that I know Brian and that I was able to work with him for a year during my AmeriCorps*VISTA term. Even though I am no longer at NEOCH, I consider this coalition as my family. Brian lives, breathes, and dresses like the population he advocates for and he is truly dedicated to the coalition and its mission. Congratulations on 10 years of wonderful work! I wish you the best in your next 10!"
-Amanda Brooks, VISTA alumnus

"Brian Davis has done a superb job as Executive Director of NEOCH for the last 10 years. Under his leadership, NEOCH has become a well respected organization in the community. Thanks, Brian, for your motivation and hard work over the past 10 years."
-Roy C. Love, President of the Board of Trustees

"Brian continues to amaze me with his professional focus on advocacy. His deep commitment to the issues related to homelessness is without equal. Being able to confront the true issues, often in the face of strong opposition, is truly a gift and his credibility in the Cleveland community is untouchable. Homeless people and NEOCH as an organization are blessed by his leadership."
-David Westcott, Board of Trustees

"I would like to thank Brian for taking on countless thankless jobs and tasks over the years. He has been an extraordinary advocate."
-Rob Anderle, Porter Wright Morris & Arthur L.L.P.

Recognizing Brian Davis

for his 10 years of service to NEOCH

"What can you say about superman? Working with Brian for the past three years, I find myself wondering why? Why work 60 hour weeks and why fight a battle that seems hopeless? Then one day a woman comes in the office and tells her story of how NEOCH's programs and Brian's advocacy have made a way for her to pull her family out of a homeless state. Then I understand why. Thank you, Brian, for your passion, dedication and leadership, I can truly say I am honored to have known and worked with you. Congratulations on your ten years. But what are you waiting for? End homelessness!!!"

-Teri D. Horne, Director of Operations

"WWBD? Even now, years after I've left Cleveland, I find myself in difficult management situations thinking, 'what would Brian do?' Here's what I learned from Brian Davis:

- standing up for social justice is not only admirable, but also my responsibility;
- sometimes it really is everyone else who is wrong;
- Brian's funny;
- any document always has room for at least one more edit;
- what a privilege it is to do everyday what I feel passionately about.

Thank you for all you've given to me and the myriad AmeriCorps* members who landed the best service job in the nation. As you would say, Good luck!"

- Staci Santa, Past Associate Director and Lead VISTA

"Congratulations on 10 years of service, Brian. It's been a great experience working with you. Your superior work ethics and commitment to the folks we serve is truly inspiring. Your extensive knowledge of this community is always something that I rely on. Keep up the great job and hope you're here for another 10 years."

-Mike Gibbs, Cleveland Community Voice Mail Program Director

"Brian is a steadfast advocate, and his commitment to his work is obvious and inspiring. The Greater Cleveland community is lucky to have him, and, for my part, it's an honor to work with him."

-Johanna Keenan, NEOCH Board of Trustees

"It was always good to know that whatever challenges NEOCH faced, Brian always had a good answer. Within his 10 years of experience with NEOCH, he has developed a keen sense of what issues the organization should get involved in and how to make it work as a true service organization."

-Joe Perrelli, VISTA alumnus

"As Brian's wife, I see a different side of him than most others do. In the past 10 years, through his increasing involvement with NEOCH, he has shown a commitment to the cause of ending homelessness that I really admire. This commitment is not something that he just puts on and takes off as necessary. He lives this commitment every day, in every thing he does."

-Tanya Goff Davis

"Brian is a true advocate for the homeless. He is always available to answer questions and provide information to other programs. In the 10 years that Brian has been at the helm of NEOCH, he has removed many barriers for the homeless. He has coordinated a group of VISTAs and volunteers who have been able to accomplish a great deal for NEOCH. Congratulations, Brian on your service to the homeless, and the entire community."

-Marcia G. Zashin, Ed.D. Project ACT

Homeless Grapevine Newspaper

The big news from 2004 was that the *Homeless Grapevine* survived to publish another day. After 10 years of publishing, the *Grapevine* hit a rough spot and was in debt. With community support and the assistance of a couple of religious congregations, the paper pulled out of debt in 2004. Late in the year, the Corporation for National Service awarded the Coalition a grant to hire eight national service members. One of those individuals is working to sustain the *Grapevine* newspaper. We lost our dear friend Daniel Thompson in 2004, and the *Grapevine* has done much to memorialize him. Despite all the adversity, the *Grapevine* published six issues in 2004.

Advocacy

NEOCH led an effort in 2004 to remove the hate-filled and exploitative videos of homeless people from being sold on the internet. Major retailers in the United States such as Amazon.com and Best Buy were selling amateur videos of homeless people being beaten or humiliated by young people. After some public pressure and a letter writing campaign, we were able to get all the major websites and retail outlets to pull the videos. NEOCH finally saw the overflow shelter open to accommodate the large numbers who go to 2100 Lakeside Men's shelter, as the men had requested for years. NEOCH did a huge amount of work to prepare for the November election in registering nearly 400 people and transporting over 300 people to the polling places on November 2, 2004. NEOCH assisted the local shelters to make sure that those who entered the shelters were registered to vote, documenting 1,700 who were homeless that voted in the recent Presidential election. NEOCH also worked with other housing organizations to assist with a town hall forum moderated by Council President Frank Jackson.

Cleveland Community Voice Mail (CCVM)

2004 was a rough year for CCVM; because of the lack of community support, the program was under staffed. However we were still able to serve over 3,500 individuals and successfully expanded to serve 100 clients in Lorain County. CCVM has proven to be a successful program and we are hopeful the community will see the benefit and support it. 2005 marks the fifth anniversary of service to Greater Cleveland.

In five years the voicemail program has served over 15,000 homeless and phoneless individuals. CCVM has partnered with over 100 agencies in this community. This program is a success because of the hard work of the program director, Mike Gibbs, who has been with the voicemail program since its inception.

CCVM is the only such program in Ohio. Toledo had a program, but because of a lack of financial support, this program was forced to close its doors. It is Mike's dream to expand the program statewide; and with the support of the community and state, that dream can be realized. Currently, we have met with several cities that are ready to bring this essential program to their town, with the Cleveland program serving as a model.

Celebrating 5 years of service

Donors to NEOCH in 2004 (non-members)

All Saints Evangelist Lutheran Church
 Abington Foundation
 Bay Presbyterian Church
 Change for Charity - Legacy Village
 Christ Lutheran Church
 Christ the Redeemer Lutheran
 Cleveland Bar Foundation
 Cleveland Foundation
 COHHIO
 Computer Associates
 Eva and Joseph Bruening Foundation
 Federal Government - HUD
 Community Foundation of Greater Lorain
 Corporation for National Service
 Deaconess Community Foundation
 Emily Waters Foundation
 Episcopal Diocese of Ohio
 First Federal Bank of Lakewood
 GESU Church
 George Gund Foundation
 Greater Cleveland Community Shares
 Leiden Cabinet Company
 Mac's Backs Bookstore, Inc.
 Murphy Family Foundation
 Nord Family Foundation
 Patton & Company
 Plymouth Church of Shaker Heights
 PPG Industries Foundation
 Saint Angela Merici Church
 Saint Ann Foundation
 Saint Luke's Foundation
 Saint Matthew Lutheran Church
 St. Timothy Missionary Baptist Church
 SBC Lifeline Program
 Sisters of Saint Joseph
 Thomas White Foundation
 United Way Services



2004 Financial Overview

Revenue 2004

Foundation	\$139,263	35.6%
Government	\$140,298	35.9%
Individual Donors	\$27,739	7.1%
Religious Organizations	\$23,046	5.9%
Corporations	\$14,241	3.6%
Community Shares	\$13,883	3.6%
Special Events	\$12,311	3.2%
Membership	\$9,274	2.4%
Grapevine Sales	\$7,310	1.9%
Program Fees	\$2,281	0.6%
Program Operation	\$972	0.2%
Other Revenue	\$76	0.0%

Total* **\$390,694**

Donated Goods/Services \$47,521

2003 Revenue* \$395,517
 2002 Revenue* \$267,655

Expenses 2004

Salaries	\$163,204	44.3%
Administrative Salaries	\$73,156	19.9%
Taxes/Benefits	\$30,221	8.2%
Telephone	\$20,145	5.5%
Rent	\$18,222	5.0%
Professional	\$16,495	4.5%
Office/Copying	\$8,661	2.4%
Program Operations	\$6,585	1.8%
VISTA Stipend/Relocate	\$5,477	1.5%
Travel	\$5,107	1.4%
Grapevine Printing	\$3,961	1.1%
Insurance	\$3,221	0.9%
Banking	\$3,167	0.9%
Postage	\$2,714	0.7%
Equipment	\$2,613	0.7%
Conference/Training	\$2,555	0.7%
Printing	\$2,550	0.7%

Total* **\$368,054**

2003 Expenses* \$395,818
 2002 Expenses* \$368,684

*unaudited bookkeeping financial report

Annual Dinner Donors, 2005

African Safari Wildlife Park
 Alexander's Family Restaurant
 Ambiance The Store For Lovers!
 Cassidy Theatre
 Cleveland Browns
 Cleveland Cinemas
 Cleveland Indians
 Cuyahoga Valley Scenic Railroad
 Denise Sobieski
 Diane V. Madrigal
 Dobama Theatre
 Gesu Catholic Church Social Concern Commission
 Inner Fire
 Jeanne Collieran Weaver
 Jim and Rosemary Nemeth
 John Robert's Hair Studio & Spa
 Jubar Salaam
 Kelly Burd
 Lake County Captains
 Lake Metro Parks Nature and Recreation
 Mohican Resort and Conference Center
 Northfield Park
 Pickwick & Frolic Restaurant and Club
 Pizzazz Restaurant & Pizzeria
 Reizend Kuche
 Robert and Elizabeth Sobieski
 Sister Laura Wallace
 Tanya Goff
 Trolley Tours of Cleveland
 The Cleveland Orchestra
 The Inn on Coventry
 United Way Services



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joanburda@neoch.org
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Award Winners, 2004

Advocate of the Year

Roy C. Love

For his six years of service to the Coalition and his commitment to ending homelessness

Volunteers of the Year

Theresa Young

Yvonne Bruce

For their commitment to volunteering with the *Homeless Grapevine*

Social Justice Advocate of the Year

Michael Foley

For his lifetime of fighting for social justice in Northeast Ohio

Strategic Plan, 2005 - 2010

Beginning in 2003 and extending through most of 2004, the Northeast Ohio Coalition for the Homeless examined the work of the agency and set about to address the problems faced by homeless people. Led by the NEOCH Board of Trustees, the agency examined the history of the organization and the potential threats faced in the community. NEOCH examined the current environment for the organization and the relevance of the current NEOCH mission. Strategic partners, board and staff looked at the agency's strengths and the accomplishments over the last 10 years.

The Board coordinated a series of meetings with homeless people, as well as a survey of our membership and partner agencies. From the surveys results submitted, it was found that most people had a good understanding of the work of the Coalition and most people had a very favorable opinion of NEOCH. Most of those responding felt that NEOCH should continue overseeing programs along with holding a strong advocacy position. There was a clear majority who felt that NEOCH should work on coordination of fundraising activities around homelessness, but on this point there were many who disagreed.

The Board looked at the series of meetings with homeless people to decide on continuing the focus on jobs, housing, health care and civil rights. The issue of hunger and nutrition appeared high on the priority list of homeless people. The NEOCH Board decided that this was out of the scope of our mission and there are good advocates in the community to take up the issue of food and hunger.

The Board spent a great deal of time examining the process of bringing new programs to the Coalition for support. The overriding priority for the Board was to stabilize current programs before funding new projects. The Board set guidelines for adding new projects as well as assuming fiscal agency for other groups under the umbrella of the Coalition.

Many questions came from the surveys submitted, which the Board has pledged to address over the next year. They have also committed to evaluate the progress toward the goals on a yearly basis.



Strategic Plan, 2005 - 2010

A summary of the strategic goals for the next five years include:

The NEOCH Board needs to take a stronger role in supervising fund development opportunities for the organization and remains committed to involvement in local policy decisions.

The NEOCH Board needs to have clear job descriptions and assert a strong leadership role in the advancement of this plan and creating opportunities for sustainability for the organization and current programs.

NEOCH should not get involved in advocacy and organizing around reductions in funding. Over the next five years, it is expected that homelessness will not be a priority at the State or National level, and programs should expect reductions in funding.

NEOCH will concentrate on four areas and will attempt to maintain and, where possible, improve local services in the areas of housing, health care, economic justice and civil rights. The agency should develop a specific plan for these areas of advocacy with input from the agency's constituency and strategic partners.

NEOCH should work toward the development of shelter standards, a homeless ombudsman officer, and a strong leadership role for homeless people to further the goal of empowerment for our main constituency.

NEOCH intends to develop sustainability opportunities for each of the programs to expand and enhance, including Bridging the Gap, Voice Mail, Legal Assistance and the National Service opportunities at NEOCH.

NEOCH must develop a mechanism for the *Homeless Grapevine* to bring in more resources to move toward a more independent and self sustaining street newspaper without NEOCH staff participating in the editorial decisions of the paper.

NEOCH needs to work toward the creation of a staff position to focus on the public education component of the organization. This position will oversee media, public relations, speaker's bureau, and constructing opportunities to amplify the voice of those experiencing homelessness.

NEOCH should maintain its current administrative structure with the addition of an individual to direct and supervise all development activities in order to secure unrestricted funds for the agency. There is a need for additional staff resources on advocacy.

NEOCH must explore strategic partnerships that will allow for the increase in revenue for the agency including artistic, membership and corporate partners.