Exciting changes are coming to Quincy!

Father Bill’s & MainSpring (FBMS) is partnering with the state, City of Quincy, and our supporters to build a Housing Resource Center (HRC), a new two-building development that will revamp our approach to preventing and ending homelessness. FBMS first proposed the HRC model in our 5-Year Strategic Plan that began in 2015.

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WEYMOUTH NATIVE HEADS HOME AFTER 4 YEARS IN SHELTER

For Mike, moving into his own apartment this past January was extra special because he was back in Weymouth, the town where he grew up and went to high school.

Generous support from people like you helped Mike, an Air Force Veteran, end his homelessness after four years in emergency shelter. Now 60 years old, he’s happy to have his own space inside a home managed by Father Bill’s & MainSpring (FBMS) for 6 formerly homeless Veterans.

“It was the best fit to be back here in Weymouth where I’m from,” Mike said.

A lack of affordable housing and other factors outside of his control caused Mike to become homeless in 2016. He moved into the MainSpring House, FBMS’ emergency shelter in Brockton for individuals experiencing homelessness.

Our shelter operations, supported by private donations, provided Mike with three meals a day, access to basic healthcare services, and assistance from a Veterans case manager. Most importantly, the shelter kept him from spending cold winter nights out on the streets.

When the pandemic arrived in 2020, Mike was among the guests who stayed in the tents set up next to the MainSpring House. The tents allowed guests to safely social distance during the first wave of COVID-19.

Mike has been assisted by FBMS case managers Ben Hunter, Tom Washington, and Stephen Vieira. Stephen helped Mike access Veterans benefits through Weymouth Veterans Services that are supplementing his income.

“I was quite lucky” Mike said.

Mike, who is getting along nicely with his Veteran housemates, enjoys living within walking distance of several restaurants and his favorite coffee shop, and he’s happy to have his own TV to watch the Patriots, Bruins, and Celtics.

His next goals are to buy a car and potentially land a part-time job.

SWEATSHIRT FUNDRAISER SUPPORTS FBMS

Cape Cod Lumber selected FBMS as the beneficiary of its annual hooded sweatshirt fundraiser, collecting more than $7,000 toward our mission!

“As a local business, we like to stay involved in the surrounding community and help where we can. We partner with Father Bill’s & MainSpring because their mission aligns with CCL’s core values and has such a positive impact all over the South Shore of Massachusetts.” said Tom McManus, CCL President.

The Abington-based company, one of the region’s largest building-supply retailers, designed a sweatshirt featuring its logo and slogan “A Name You Can Build On.” The sweatshirt, sold this past fall and winter, also featured FBMS’ logo.

Cape Cod Lumber, which donated 100 percent of the sweatshirt proceeds to our agency, is also a regular supporter of our signature FoodFest fundraiser.

“We are grateful to Cape Cod Lumber, a longtime supporter of our mission, for once again stepping up for our neighbors in need,” FBMS Chief Development Officer Catie Reilly said. “Cape Cod Lumber is a well-respected, employee-owned business with a rich history on the South Shore. We are proud to have our logo featured on their 2020 sweatshirt.”

DOES YOUR EMPLOYER MATCH DONATIONS?

Did you know many companies offer matching gifts programs which can double, or even triple, the impact of your support? Many will match gifts made by spouses, or even honor your volunteer service with a gift.

To find out if your employer has a matching gift program, visit helpfbsms.org/matchinggift. And to learn more about how you and your employer can support our mission, send us an e-mail at info@helpfbsms.org.
On January 13, 2021, Anne Deschenes, our Child Services Coordinator and the longest-serving employee at Father Bill’s & MainSpring (FBMS), passed away at the age of 69. It was a tremendous loss for our mission and our community.

Anne dedicated her career to supporting children and families struggling with homelessness across Southern Massachusetts. She advocated for families and supported them in accessing childcare and camps, school supplies, books, and birthday and holiday gifts, among many other contributions to FBMS’ mission.

“She would always tell me I was a good mom and sometimes I would feel bad for our living situation and things I didn’t have around Christmas. Her words of wisdom and positivity were always much-needed at those times,” said Marika, a former FBMS shelter guest.

Colleagues described Anne as the “center of our mission” and the “mother of our programs.” Always smiling, Anne made everyone feel welcome and supported.

“I will miss her terribly, as will everyone else here. But I’m happy to have had the opportunity to know her and to work with her for so many years,” said Cicely Jordan, FBMS Re-Housing Manager.

To honor Anne’s life and legacy, we named the playground at our Evelyn House family shelter in Stoughton after Anne. FBMS plans to host a small dedication ceremony with Anne’s family later this summer.

Also, we have renamed FBMS’ tribute program to the Anne Deschenes Memorial Fund, which symbolizes the lasting impact that Anne had on our mission.

All donations made to the Anne Deschenes Memorial Fund will ensure that FBMS has the resources needed to continue providing the high level of care and services to the children, families, and individuals served by FBMS.

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To make a donation to the Anne Deschenes Memorial Fund visit helpfbms.org/donate.

SHATYRA BYSON
In late 2020, Shatyra Byson, an employee at Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, was awarded with a Community Spirit Award from the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation in recognition of Shatyra’s many community contributions, including her volunteer work at FBMS.

Shatyra began volunteering at FBMS when she was in 8th grade, as part of a class project. She has been supporting our mission ever since!

“It was really impactful,” Shatyra said of her first time volunteering at Father Bill’s Place in Quincy as a student. “Everybody was so thankful for us being there. It gave me a new outlook on what it means to be homeless and what it means to be in need.”

Shatyra continued volunteering at FBMS as a student at Emmanuel College and then when she started working for Harvard Pilgrim Health Care nine years ago. As chair of Harvard Pilgrim’s Black Leaders Forum Employee Resource Group, she has helped organize meal donations and clothing drives for our shelters in Quincy and Brockton.

This past February, the Black Leaders Forum hosted a virtual event during which employees wrote uplifting hand-written notes for our shelter guests. These notes were delivered to guests along with delicious meals purchased from a local black-owned restaurant. The meals were generously sponsored by the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation in recognition of Black History Month.

ALTERNATIVES TO FOODFEST
For a second straight year, we have made the difficult decision to cancel FoodFest, our signature fundraiser. This is a significant loss for our mission at FBMS, considering we rely on funds raised at FoodFest to operate our emergency shelters.

Given the ongoing need for our essential services, we are relying on our community of supporters to step up during this critical time. We plan to collaborate with our restaurant partners and incorporate some other elements of FoodFest, just on a smaller, more intimate scale.

For more information about how you or your employer can support our mission, please contact Brendan Monahan, FBMS Corporate & Foundation Relations Specialist, at 508-427-6448 ext. 2286 or at bmonahan@helpfbms.org. Also, follow us on social media for updates.
INNOVATION

On March 31, 2021, Governor Charlie Baker, Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito, House Speaker Ronald Mariano and other officials visited Father Bill’s Place in Quincy to announce funding for a number of key projects across the state, including $4 million for the first phase of our HRC.

Other speakers at the event included Secretary of Housing and Economic Development Mike Kennealy, State Senator John Keenan of Quincy, Quincy Mayor Thomas Koch, and FBMS President & CEO John Yazwinski. They were joined by state and city officials as well as local housing advocates, FBMS staff and shelter guests to celebrate this very big day for our mission.

The HRC model aims to reduce reliance on overnight shelter by offering day services to focus on homelessness prevention, diversion, and rapid re-housing. The HRC will consist of a new day center, an emergency shelter, and on-site efficiency apartments.

The first phase of the HRC, set to start later this year, is the construction of a two-story, 16,000 square-foot building comprised of kitchen/dining space, lockers and showers, a healthcare clinic, shelter beds, and services. The second phase is a four-story, 20,000-square-foot building comprised of 30 units of permanent supportive housing for formerly homeless individuals.

THE ROAD AHEAD

FBMS to convert Brockton hotel into 69 housing units

As we begin to emerge from the pandemic, Father Bill’s & MainSpring (FBMS) is committed to creating a “new normal” in the way we address homelessness.

With your support, we have purchased the Rodeway Inn in Brockton with plans to convert the hotel into permanent supportive housing for 69 homeless individuals. Since June 2020, the closed hotel has been used as a satellite shelter, allowing our Brockton shelter guests to safely social distance during the COVID-19 crisis.

FBMS believes that we can’t return to an overcrowded shelter system that puts our guests, staff, and community at risk during a public health crisis. That is why our agency, with support from the City of Brockton, will convert the Rodeway Inn into efficiency-style apartments.

FBMS President & CEO John Yazwinski wrote an op-ed published in The Boston Globe on February 25, advocating for more hotel-to-housing conversions across the state. He wrote that the conversions are a proactive and cost-effective approach to health care. The Rodeway Inn conversion alone could reduce Brockton’s homeless population by half. In order to preserve these gains and make more progress in our fight to end homelessness, there will need to be continued public-private investment in new permanent supportive housing across the state.

The hotel-to-housing conversion in Brockton is expected to begin by the fall of 2021. Renovations include adding kitchenettes to all rooms, which already have their own private bathrooms, and constructing a common laundry room and electrical, mechanical and life safety systems.

The tenants, expected to start moving in later this year, will have access to case managers who will help them remain housed and become more self-sufficient.

FBMS is seeking funding support from the state’s Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). Other funders behind the $10.1 million project include CEDAC, the Arbella Insurance Foundation, Beth Israel Lahey Health, the Massachusetts Housing and Shelter Alliance, and other private donors.

In December 2020, the CEDAC board approved a $4.3 million acquisition loan to FBMS for the purchase of the Rodeway Inn.

“The new buildings will be located at 39 Broad Street, across the street from Father Bill’s Place, which is in an outdated, 7,000 square-foot building that is not equipped for day services. In September 2020, FBMS signed a 99-year-lease with the City for the site at 39 Broad Street, a key step in our plan to build the HRC.

The state’s funding is being administered through the Department of Housing and Community Development, in partnership with the Community Economic Development Assistance Corporation (CEDAC). The City of Quincy has awarded $1 million to the HRC from its Affordable Housing Trust Fund, and it has successfully applied for a Housing Choice Community Capital Grant for design and engineering work.

FBMS will rely on private fundraising to cover the remaining costs of the first phase of the HRC. For updates on the HRC and how you can help make this vision a reality, please contact FBMS Chief Development Officer Catie Reilly at 508-427-6448 ext. 2235 or at cmreilly@helpfbms.org.

"In times of crisis, it’s always those who have the least who suffer the most. COVID-19 is no different. But we’re hopeful that this crisis can be a turning point in our fight to end homelessness.

JOHN YAZWINSKI, FBMS PRESIDENT & CEO

OP-ED IN THE BOSTON GLOBE, FEB. 25, 2021

“\"I am proud to have worked alongside the Quincy delegation to help secure this grant for Father Bill’s, and look forward to seeing the positive impact their future facility will have in our community,\" said Speaker Mariano.”
Father Bill's & MainSpring

N O B B Y S H O U L D B E H O M E L E S S

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FATHER BILL'S & MAINSPRING (FBMS)
is committed to ending and preventing
homelessness in Southern Massachusetts with
a range of programs that provide emergency
and permanent housing and help people obtain
skills, jobs, housing, and supportive services.
We help people who are struggling with
homelessness or are at risk of homelessness
achieve self-sufficiency.

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THE
heartbeat

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