

For Immediate Release
Boca Helping Hands
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Boca Raton homelessness prevention agency suffers fire

Boca Raton, August 25th, 2009 - Around 7:30 on Monday night, Executive Director Linda Gove arrived at Boca Helping Hands to find smoke billowing from a broken window. Shortly after calling 911, fire trucks arrived and fought the blaze until it subsided around 11 pm.

The extent of the damage is great. Aside from data and files that were kept safe by steel filing cabinets, most everything was destroyed by fire or water. "We have sustained a major loss. Our organization is built on the passionate men and women who volunteer everyday and the outpouring of help today is an amazing example of that." Linda Gove refers to the mass of volunteers that came to aid in the clean up effort.

Among the volunteers was an impressive crew from the St. Andrews School. Headmaster Dr. Ann Marie Krejcarek led a crew in the clean up of the old offices and the set-up of the new. "Community Service is at the heart of what we do at St. Andrews." Dr. Krejcarek and the team at St. Andrews have not only participated in the manual labor, but have orchestrated the donation of 10 computers, several desks, telephones, and other necessities.

Board President, Gary Peters, is concerned for the clients. He said that the Job Mentoring Program was taking off. Last week they saw 22 new clients. "People knew where we were, who we were, and the momentum was really building."

The property owner has arranged to provide temporary spaces for BHH to operate out of. The two bays in the plaza that the organization currently run out of, the Assistance Center and The Job Mentoring Center, will be split up and moved to three new suites. The food pantry will remain where it is as it is far enough from the offices that it did not sustain any damage. Fortunately, the organization has plans to move into a 15,000 sq ft facility made possible by private donors. Brooke Pickett, Director of Development is looking towards the future. "The Remillard Family Resource Center will house all of our programs under one roof. This situation is a terrible but powerful motivator to raise the money and get the building completed so we can move in."

Boca Helping Hands is asking for monetary and in-kind donations such as, computers, chairs, desks, furniture, printers and office supplies. The temporary address where they are receiving donations is 127 NW 13th St. Suite #13, Boca Raton 33432

The 3rd Annual Bowling for Bread Event at Strikes @ Boca will not be cancelled. There are lanes still available, for more information please contact Brooke Pickett 561-254-0236.

About Boca Helping Hands: Boca Helping Hands is a 501(c)(3) non profit organization, dedicated to providing compassionate service through food and assistance programs to individuals, families and children to instill dignity and break the cycle of dependence. They are in their 11th year.

For more information please contact Gary Peters or Anne Jaakkola at 561-994-7330

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