



## Quarterly Newsletter

### ***From the Board President***

Dear Friend,

For many of us, the months ahead will prompt a feeling of gratitude for what we have in life and compel us to look for ways to give back. The need to feel good about making some positive contribution in our community can be overwhelming given the dire circumstances many in the world are facing today.

Here at Friends In Deed, we take solace in striving to go above and beyond the basics of our programs and services. This time of year provides beautiful examples of ways to participate in extra services:

- The Women's Room guests will have the opportunity to show off their creative pieces at a [full art show](#) at First United Methodist Church this Saturday, October 21st.
- Our Food Pantry will be teaming up with the Pasadena Jaycees for Operation Gobbler, to provide Thanksgiving meals to our Food Pantry community members.
- Saint Mark's Episcopal Church will be selling Christmas trees again this year, with proceeds being donated to Friends In Deed.
- Christmas for the Kids is coming up, and at the end of November there will be a Giving Tree at Vroman's Bookstore to provide toys and gifts to the children in our Food Pantry community.

If you feel inspired to participate in one of these opportunities, stay tuned for full details. If you have an idea or would like to get involved in another way, please [reach out to one of our staff](#) program directors.

We hope the stories below will inspire and invigorate each of us to take action in our community and help those who might need a hand extended their way.

Bret Schaefer  
Board President, Friends In Deed



**It is through your generosity that we are able to provide these programs and services**

**Donate today**

**Join the Legacy Society**

## ***Stories from Our Programs***

### **Jerry's Story - Forceful Advocacy**

Jerry - a senior with a heart condition and a hearing impairment - had been homeless for over 20 years. Originally from Tennessee, he has lived all around the greater Los Angeles area and could often be found panhandling outside Cheesecake Factory in Pasadena with his dog, Spot.

The bond between Jerry and Spot is very strong - Jerry will go nowhere without Spot, and Spot is very protective of Jerry. This can sometimes become a problem - Jerry's deafness often means you have to talk very loudly, and if Spot thinks you're yelling at Jerry he will react with equal aggression! [Read more...](#)





### **Denise's Story - no Longer Fighting to Get a Shower**

A whole slew of issues - including tinnitus, vertigo, anxiety, depression, substance use, and a series of harmful relationships - left Denise in a bad place.

However, there came a point when Denise had not had an opportunity to shower for a long time. She started googling and Friends In Deed popped up. The thing that struck her most was that The Women's Room is a women-only facility. Even so, Denise was suffering too much from the effects of trauma to do anything more than have a shower then take off again. She came fairly regularly for a while, then disappeared for a few months. [Read more...](#)

### **Richard's Story - Coming Home**

Richard was living on and off the streets for 15 years. Sometimes he managed to find seasonal work, and sometimes housing, but never anything permanent.

One wet and miserable night he was getting a meal at Pasadena Presbyterian Church when he was told that the church across the road was giving out motel vouchers. This, of course, was FID's Bad Weather Supplies distribution at First United Methodist Church. [Read more...](#)



## ***Stories from Our Community***

### **Sophie's Story - Connecting Remotely**

Sophie first became aware of Friends In Deed through her grandmother - FID Board





Secretary Debby Singer! So when it came time to do her Bat Mitzvah project, she chose to do a sock drive for our Street Outreach team, knowing that clean dry socks are a wonderful gift to folks on the street. [Read more...](#)

## Brooke's Story - Spiritual Practice

Brooke has been a dedicated volunteer in The Women's Room for eight years. Even during the pandemic lockdown she found a way to contribute: she was one of the volunteers who regularly called our clients to check how they were doing. Some of the ladies would talk for an hour or more, needing the sense of connection they would usually get from in-person visits to TWR. Brooke says she tries to be a kind and nonjudgmental listener. She says the ladies exhibit much grace and positivity. [Read more...](#)



## Ed's Story - Getting the Bug

Ed's story with Friends In Deed begins with his membership of the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary in Pasadena. He's one of our longest serving board members - 11 years and counting - and he first became aware of Friends In Deed when he saw other members of Assumption Church donating food to the pantry. He says he "got the bug," and never looked back. [Read more...](#)

## Our Staff - Stories from Then and Now

### Najwa's Story - Passing Hope

## Along

Najwa always looks put together. Her makeup, hair, and nails are always absolutely on point (Najwa is known for her glamorously bejeweled nails!), and her clothes coordinate, right down to her shoes and belts. You can already see the attention to clothing and hair in the photo of Najwa as a little girl - and you would never imagine that between then and now, and not so very many years ago, Najwa was living on the streets and battling substance use. [Read more...](#)



## *Stories from Our Archives*



### **The Cinema 21 Story - Collapsing Ceilings and Toxic Mold**

Another colorful event from Friends In Deed's 129-year-old history is a year-long scandal involving a historic theater, retail, and apartment complex on Washington Boulevard.

Our records of the story begin in February 2003, when heavy rain damaged the already dilapidated roof of the former Cinema 21

movie theater (previously, Washington Theatre). The photo shows firefighters on the roof, weighting down tarps with wood to mitigate the damage being done, but ceilings collapsed in several of the apartment units and nine families had to be evacuated. Friends In Deed was able to provide motel vouchers for the displaced families.

It seems that the building's owner initiated repairs, and the story went quiet until April, when an inspection found toxic mold in the building. This time, the building had to be completely evacuated, with 126 (including 57 children) of Pasadena's lowest-income residents losing their homes. Frank Clark, Friends In Deed's then Executive Director, said he had "never seen a building that bad in the City of Pasadena." Paint was peeling off the walls, light fixtures were falling down, there were cockroaches, and the whole building smelled of damp and urine. Several news reports described it as a "slum."

The story continues with code violations being brought against the owner, fines, criminal charges, the building contractor suing the owner for nonpayment, and the families' possessions being held hostage because nobody could agree who should pay the storage fees.

In the meantime, FID was working with the City to provide motel vouchers and school transport for the children, rehouse the families, and organize collections of food and household goods. By October 2003, all but four of the families had been relocated to new housing.

## ***In Memoriam***

### **Harriet Montier - September 2023**

We were all saddened, at Friends In Deed, to hear of the passing of Harriet Montier this September at age 100. Harriet started volunteering at Friends In Deed around 1981 and was a Tuesday morning regular until the pandemic struck in March of 2020. If that pandemic hadn't happened, we believe she would have continued until the end. She was a cornerstone for those Tuesday mornings. Everyone that came in knew Harriet or, at least, knew of her.

Harriet was a force of life, kindness, and humor and a perfect example of the compassion, connection, and



dignity that we strive for each day at Friends In Deed. It was an honor to have her as a part of our community, and she is much missed!



### **Yvonne Hughes - July 2023**

Yvonne was involved in the creation of The Women's Room at Friends In Deed, right from the very beginning. She served on the initial All Saints Church study committee that was investigating the needs of women experiencing homelessness in the San Gabriel Valley and, following the findings of that committee, was a key part of finding a home and resources for The Women's Room, and getting

it off the ground. She was also an early volunteer, and the newspaper photograph we have here shows her on the right, with Jackie Knowles (left) and Pat O'Reilly (center), in the early days of that program.

Yvonne was a charming person who was dedicated to making the world a better place. We would like to thank Yvonne's family for honoring her memory by requesting donations to The Women's Room.

### **Ruth Ryan - August 2023**

A much-loved mother and teacher, Ruth died in August this year at the age of 96. She had a bachelor's degree in English and a master's degree in linguistics, and was also an active supporter of racial justice and reproductive rights. In later life she worked as a public-school teacher for English learners, traveled extensively, and became an enthusiastic Unitarian.

Ruth was a supporter of The Women's Room, and we would like to thank her family for mentioning that program among the causes about which Ruth felt strongly.



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## **Programs**

### **Bad Weather Supplies (BWS)**

Providing cold-weather support for our neighbors experiencing homelessness

### **Eviction Prevention and Rental Assistance (EPRA)**

Short- and medium-term rental support to prevent eviction

### **Food Pantry**

Dignified grocery shopping experience for 400+ households weekly

### **Street Outreach and Housing**

Team of workers on the streets engaging with our neighbors experiencing homelessness and connecting them to services

### **The Women's Room (TWR)**

Daytime shelter for homeless and at-risk women



## Our Staff

Rabbi Joshua Levine Grater  
*Executive Director*

Marty Campolo  
*Deputy Director and Grants Officer*

Ryan Greer  
*Senior Director of Programs*

Merria Velasco  
*Senior Director of Development*

Helen Angove  
*Operations Manager*

Tim Nistler  
*Director of The Food Pantry*

Tish Strickland  
*Director of Street Outreach and Housing*

Stacey McCarroll Cutshaw  
*Director of EPRA*

Lindsey Reed  
*Director of TWR*

Marlene Martinez  
*Assistant Director of EPRA*

Eva Rivera  
*Food Pantry Manager*

William Shelby  
*Senior Intensive Case Management Specialist*

Najwa Payton Jones  
*Housing Navigator and Outreach Liaison*

Olivia Esteb  
*Housing Navigator*

Jane Armbruster  
*TWR Program Manager and Case Counselor*

Kristina Martin  
*Food Pantry Program Associate*

## Our Board

Bret Schaefer  
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Stacy Santeramo  
*Vice President*

Christopher Pelch  
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*Secretary*

Richard Cheung  
*Immediate Past President*

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Ervin Galvan

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Nishanthi Kurukulasuriya

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Leslie White

Elyse Reed  
*Development Associate*

Angel Maxwell  
*Peer Specialist*

Jenny Juarez  
*TWR Program Associate*

Doug Haught  
*Security and Grounds*

Coty Dietel  
*Food Pantry Aide*

Stephanie Hernandez  
*MSW Intern, Housing  
Navigation*

Nora Mathison  
*MSW Intern, TWR*

Seth Reid  
*MSW Intern, EPRA*

**Friends In Deed** is committed to fostering, cultivating, and preserving a culture of diversity, equity and inclusion. We embrace and celebrate the spectrum of our employees', volunteers', and clients' ages, color, ability or disability, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, language, national origin, physical and mental ability, political affiliation, race, religion, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, veteran status, neurodiversity, and other characteristics that make our employees, volunteers, and clients unique.

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