



FRIENDS
of the FAMILY
Everyone Has A Home

FALL NEWSLETTER

BEN'S LETTER

A Note from Ben Brustkern, Executive Director

October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month and according to the CDC, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 7 men will experience physical violence by their intimate partner during their lifetime. I'm sure we all find these numbers to be staggering.

At Friends of the Family, we provide safe shelter for people fleeing domestic violence while focusing on a safe future for them. Our vision of "Everyone Has a Home" ensures that once a guest comes into shelter, that we are working with them on finding a safe place to call home.

We understand that shelter is not the place for families to heal, but once they get their own home progress can be made which leads to higher income and better performance in school.

Countless times, we see school age kids that have been in violent homes able to take a breath in shelter and finally feel a sense of safety. Once the family is able to find a place to call home, they will start to flourish again and not have the same stress they experienced in prior settings.

Imagine feeling safe in your home with endless possibilities for success. That is what Friends of the Family is able to do on a daily basis for so many.

Thank you all for your continued support. You make a difference in the lives of so many people when you support Friends of the Family.

Want to learn more about Friends of the Family and our vision? Reach out to me at ben@fofia.org or 319-576-2241.



GOOD THINGS

Office Manager and leader of our donations committee, Monique, shared that several partnerships have been cultivated with businesses and organizations in the communities we serve. The new Waverly Starbucks, Trinkets and Togs in Cedar Falls, and Two Men and a Truck are just a few! We are always looking for new partnerships in the areas and counties in which we serve. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to Monique at 319-576-2244.

Service Access Manager, Caitlyn, recently shared that the Operations Team has been hard at work doing outreach to many organizations in the community to let them know about how to access coordinated entry. This is used to assess and assist in meeting the housing needs of those who may be experiencing homelessness. It allows for a efficient approach to services and prioritizes individuals with the highest barriers.

New Director of Development! Friends of the Family recently hired a new member of our Leadership team and Director of Development, Danielle Vance! She is beyond thrilled to step into her new role and has a background in marketing. She is also proud to be part of such impactful work. Welcome Danielle!

DAY OF CARING

Friends of the Family was again able to participate in not one but two Day of Caring events this year. Volunteers in both Waverly and Mason City gave their time to complete projects, provide donations and support Friends of the Family and other organizations in their communities.

For Day of Caring in Waverly, volunteers from TruStage shopped until they dropped! For the third year in a row, they collected funds and shopped for essential items for those staying in our shelter. Pictured below, you can see all the amazing items they purchased! Wells Hollow Landscaping also helped make our shelter look beautiful! They cut, mowed, weeded and mulched, providing some much needed clean up for the area. We also had several volunteers who helped to beautify inside shelter as well, cleaning, rearranging, organizing and making everything easy to access and get to for shelter guests.

Mason City Day of Caring volunteers from First Citizens Bank helped to clean and organize the office as well as help with other small projects! We are so thankful to all who participated this year, our Volunteer Manager, Madison, for organizing and to the Waverly-Shell Rock and North Central Iowa United Ways for continuing to provide this opportunity.



FUNDING PARTNERS

Friends of the Family relies on funding from local partners to meet the needs of people affected by violence and homelessness. **Thank you!**

- Otto Schoitz Foundation
- Dupaco
- Marvin & Helen Schumacher Family Funder
- Schoen Foundation
- Bremer County Emergency Food and Shelter Program Fund
- Wahlert Foundation

TOP NEEDS:

- SOCKS - ALL SIZES (NEW OR GENTLY USED)
- BRAS - ALL SIZES (NEW/GENTLY USED)
- TWIN XL SHEETS
- BATH TOWELS/WASH CLOTHS
- AIR MATTRESSES - ANY SIZE (NEW)

Please connect with office manager, Monique, with donation questions or to schedule drop off at 319-576-2200 or Monique@fofia.org

4th Annual Putt An End to Homelessness

We had a fantastic time this summer at our 4th Annual Golf Tournament, Putt An End to Homelessness! Golfers enjoyed a beautiful day on the course at Prairie Links in Waverly.

Over \$21,500 was raised to get even closer to our 10-year vision of Everyone Has A Home!

We are thankful for our presenting sponsor, Scheels, (who just so happen to be this year's winner for the second year in a row, pictured on the middle right!) as well as all the sponsors who were a part of this year's event.

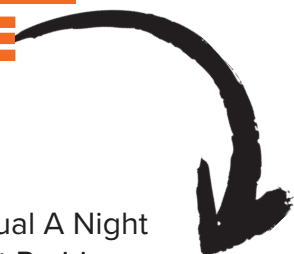


Make sure to be on the look out for our announcement of next year's date and location! We'll see you on the course!



WHERE WE'VE BEEN

WHERE WE'LL BE



A Night in Aspen

Make plans to join us for our annual A Night In... Aspen! Friday, November 8 at Prairie Links Golf and Event Center in Waverly from 6pm to 9pm.



Mark your calendars and get ready for a night of wintry fun, live and silent auction, entertainment from Cedar Valley Strings and dinner from Blue Barn BBQ. All to raise funds to end homelessness to get us even closer to our vision of Everyone Has a Home.



Every \$40 ticket also gets you a 1 in 500 chance to win a trip to Aspen! (QR code for tickets is on the back of this newsletter) This event is limited, so grab your tickets now before they are sold out. If you can't attend the event, no worries! You do not need to be present to win! Sponsorship opportunities are available as well! Reach out to our Development Director at danielle@fofia.org for info.

IOWA TOP WORKPLACE

Friends of the Family has been recognized as an Iowa Top Workplace, earning a spot on the Des Moines Register's 2024 list. The agency was one of 132 businesses and organizations honored across the state. This distinction reflects the organization's commitment to fostering a positive, inclusive work environment while remaining dedicated to its mission of ending homelessness and supporting survivors of domestic violence.

A staff member shared, "I make a difference in my community. This job allows me to be who I am and not try to represent myself differently. It challenges me and allows me to grow as an employee." This sentiment echoes the culture at Friends of the Family, where employees are empowered to thrive both personally and professionally.

Executive Director Ben Brustkern expressed the agency's pride in receiving this recognition. "We are honored to be recognized as a top workplace in the State of Iowa, and it shows how our employees at Friends of the Family are focused on making the agency a great place to work. The job we do is hard, but each day staff come focused and prepared to meet the challenges we face to end homelessness in our community."

Energage CEO Eric Rubino, whose organization partners with the Des Moines Register for the Top Workplaces award, emphasized the importance of employee feedback in achieving such honors.

"Earning a Top Workplaces award is a badge of honor for companies, especially because it comes authentically from their employees. That's something to be proud of. In today's market, leaders must ensure they're allowing employees to have a voice and be heard. That's paramount. Top Workplaces do this, and it pays dividends."

Several staff were able to attend this year's Top Workplace award ceremony where Friends of the Family also received the Meaningfulness award, one of twelve special recognition awards presented at the event. This signifies that Friends of the Family had an exceptional response from staff to the

question, "My job makes me feel like I am part of something meaningful."

Friends of the Family's recognition as a top workplace demonstrates the agency's commitment to supporting its staff and creating a strong, mission-driven work environment where we can work everyday towards our vision: Everyone Has a Home.



BOARD MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Meet our newest board member, Nate Miller.

Hello! I am a partner with the Beecher Law Firm in Waterloo, and I specialize in real estate, probate, and estate planning. I have been practicing law since I graduated from the University of Iowa College of Law in 2015.

I chose to be on the Friends of the Family Board because I believe in the mission and work of the organization. We serve people who are at their most vulnerable by providing shelter, services, and assistance. These needs are some of the most basic needs for anyone, and I believe Friends of the Family provides all of us an opportunity to help those who need it most.



MEET OUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS



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If you are interested in joining our board, please reach out to Development Director, Danielle Vance, 319-576-2240 or danielle@fofia.org.



Prairie Links Event Center 19 Eagle Ridge Dr., Waverly



Get your tickets now, scan the code.

Your \$40 ticket give you a 1 in 500 chance to win a trip to Nashville! Need not be present to win.

Friday, November 8, from 6 to 9
Prairie Links Golf and Event Center in Waverly.

A Friends of the Family
Holiday Event

A Night in Aspen



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