34 years ago, the tragic death of a homeless veteran on the streets of Boulder compelled our community to act. Since that time, you have trusted the Boulder Shelter for the Homeless to bring relief to our homeless neighbors whose misfortune left them without a place to call home and no safe place to spend the night. From that first year to today, we have worked to honor that trust, while providing over 60,000 bed nights a year and over 100,000 meals a year to as many as 1600 different people a year.

We take your trust seriously, and are mindful of your expectation that we learn and evolve towards practices that truly work for our clients, practices that are measured for impact, and practices that are evidence-based.

You have been there for us every step of the way, providing 34 years of service to the adult homeless population in Boulder County. Take a look at where we’ve been together:

- 1982 — The Shelter started winter overnight sheltering services
- 1987 — Increased capacity to 68 beds by moving to 4645 Broadway
- 1987 — In partnership with Mental Health Partners, started mental health services at the Shelter
- 1993 — In partnership with First Nazarene Church, started overflow for 30 clients
- 1996 — Started the Shelter’s Transition Program
- 1998 — Started Boulder County Cares (BCC) street outreach program
- 2001 — In partnership with the People’s Clinic, started health services at Shelter
- 2002 — Increased bed capacity to 122 by using rotating church overflow
- 2003 — Moved to 4869 Broadway, opening with a capacity of 134 beds
- 2005 — Increased bed capacity to 145
- 2005 — In partnership with Dental Aid, started dental services at the Shelter
- 2006 — Increased bed capacity to 160 beds
- 2006 — In partnership with the City of Longmont, expanded BCC to Longmont
- 2007 — In partnership with Boulder Housing Partners (BHP), started Boulder County Housing First Program
- 2008 — In partnership with Boulder County Advocates for Transitional Housing, took over 12 Transitional Housing units
- 2011 — Started the Shelter’s First Step Program
- 2012 — In partnership with Boulder County, started the Regional Benefits Coordinator
- 2015 — In partnership with the City of Boulder, started the Summer Bed Program
- 2015 — In partnership with BHP, opened the 31-unit 1175 Lee Hill facility
- 2016 — In partnership with Bridge House, opened the Resource Center at the Shelter

Once again, we have reason to celebrate another step forward together. Collaborating with Boulder County and the Cities of Boulder and Longmont, starting this fall the Shelter will spearhead a new region-wide expansion of housing opportunities with the aim of taking the neediest off the streets quickly and providing them with housing and the in-home support needed to stay housed, stable and safe.

For 34 years, you have trusted the Shelter and joined us in facing the complex challenge of serving the homeless. Together, we have celebrated our clients’ successes and we have mourned when they have succumbed too soon. Now we are excited to step forward with you - and with all we have learned - and evolve again. We pledge to utilize the wisdom that our clients share with us and to strive to have an even bigger impact on those with the least.

Thank you for your trust and for your support.
This fall, adult homeless services in our community will be new and improved.

The Boulder Shelter, along with its sister agencies, the City of Boulder, the City of Longmont and Boulder County will be implementing a new Coordinated Entry system to evaluate, refer and serve homeless adults in Boulder County. This new system will focus even more services on the most vulnerable of the homeless population and on those individuals with local ties. These changes will also improve our coordination with other agencies with the ultimate goal of better outcomes for our clients.

The transition to this new system may be a little bumpy for clients, staff and volunteers; however, we are confident that this upgraded approach will result in more homeless people leaving the streets for good. We are excited about this enhanced approach to service delivery and deeply appreciate your continued support as we evolve to meet the needs of the most vulnerable among us.

Brandi A.  

Why do you work at the Shelter?  
What began as a rewarding weekly Shelter volunteer opportunity turned into a fulfilling full-time career for me! I looked forward to my time at the Shelter as a volunteer, so when I heard the Shelter was hiring I seized that opportunity. I have now worked here for almost four years! Work at the Shelter is challenging, but it is also rewarding. This is what drives me to do this work and pushes me to understand the needs of the community and people we serve here in order to help them succeed. The work environment at the Shelter is unlike any other I have experienced. The strong camaraderie between staff, volunteers, and even clients, always gets us through the rough times.

What are your daily responsibilities?  
I am involved with a few different programs, so my daily responsibilities are varied. As the Volunteer Manager, I am frequently checking in with our wonderful and dedicated volunteers to ensure they have an exceptional experience while they are at the Shelter. Since our volunteers play such a vital role in the way we run our programs, it is my job to make sure we have no gaps in our schedule.

Additionally, I assist in our Transitional Housing program by collecting rent, conducting monthly site visits to our units, and checking in with vendors and contractors. Finally, I work alongside our program staff on the floor. This is when I get the most interaction with our clients, ensuring a safe and calm evening in the Shelter.

What exceptional challenges and/or opportunities have you discovered in your work here?  
Coming from a small town, I was not exposed to many of the honest and real experiences I now find at the Shelter. It has been a challenge for me to gain new perspectives on things I thought I knew about. In a way, I was ignorant to many of the truths our clients face, and it has forced me to be open and honest with myself. Concepts like trauma-informed care, vicarious trauma and even self-care were all foreign to me. It can be challenging to have to make decisions in the moment, when safety is on the line. Too often, I replay these instances in my head and wonder how I could have handled them differently.

What do you like to do for fun?  
There so much to do in the great state of Colorado, where do I start? Mostly, I enjoy anything outdoors: hiking, biking, camping, playing my ukulele at the park, or relaxing on a patio. When I find time, I also enjoy practicing yoga.
Bill, Roland, Jim  
Wednesday Community Food Share organizers

How long have you been volunteering at the Shelter and in which volunteer positions have you participated? 
Bill: I’ve been unloading the Community Food Share truck for about 2 years, and doing Monday night dinners for 5-6 years. 
Roland: I’ve been preparing evening meals with the Carriage Hills group and helping unload the weekly food shipment from Food Share for two years. 
Jim: I started in November 2016. I have volunteered as an Intake Assistant and have been working with these guys since the spring.

What inspired you to volunteer at the Shelter? 
Bill: What is more essential than food and shelter? These are bedrock causes for me, and this work at the Shelter addresses them. 
Roland: When I returned to Boulder in 2011 I wanted to become involved in helping those less fortunate. Bill told me about the Shelter and I invited my wife to join me in volunteering here. 
Jim: I had a couple of friends who were in and out of shelters growing up. We are all in the community together and I’m happy to help when I can.

Has anything surprised you about volunteering at the Shelter? If so, what? 
Bill: It shouldn’t be surprising, but I’m constantly impressed by the dedication of the staff. They work hard in sometimes challenging conditions, and their devotion to their work is remarkable. It’s also satisfying and uplifting to see the gratitude of the people who come through the dinner lines. 
Roland: I was very surprised by the warm reception and many thanks we receive from the residents at dinnertime as they passed through the line. 
Jim: I was pleasantly surprised at the level of organization and thought that has been put into the design and workings of the Shelter. The staff does a great job, as they are well trained for conflict situations. And the tone of mutual respect and nonviolence provides a safe place for all. The clean dorms, healthy meals, privacy, and access to over the counter medication is really great.

What is your favorite story or interaction from your time volunteering at the Shelter? 
Bill: It might be the calzone story. A crew of eight people had to make 160 calzones from scratch, plus dessert, a side dish, and salad—in two hours. They were some of the ugliest calzones you have ever seen—big lumps of (baked) dough with filling leaking out all over the place. But they were tasty and nutritious, and no one complained.

Why have you chosen to support the Shelter? It is an efficient, well run non-profit. It manages to get the biggest bang for its always-limited bucks. Contributions are budgeted to make a significant impact for its population.

Why does the Shelter matter to you? 
The income gap in our society works to the benefit of so many of us in Boulder County. The Shelter provides relief to those on the downside of that equation. Until we can solve the challenging problems of poverty and mental health in America, we should do our best to aid those in need.

How have you been personally involved with the Shelter? 
Every December holiday season, my kids, grandkids (and increasingly their peers) and I serve dinner at the Shelter.

We bring holiday deserts to add to the occasion. We sit and talk with some of the residents afterwards. It is a small commitment, but it helps us all to understand the plight of those in need, and appreciate our own good fortune.
Great day, great fun. Thank you to Tube to Work Day – Friday, July 14, 2017 – for including the Boulder Shelter in this awesome Boulder Tradition.

Delighted to have Google volunteers here at the Shelter, organizing our pantry, our outreach supplies and linens, and deep cleaning our kitchen. We are grateful for our partnership with GoogleServe!

The longtime Boulder Shelter volunteer and co-owner of Handlebar Mustache saw a need to provide high-quality socks to the homeless, so for every two pairs of socks sold on hbstache.com, Handlebar Mustache gives one pair to local homeless shelters, including the Boulder Shelter. Have you seen their socks? Awesome!

August 21, 2017: Great day to pause. Like you, we took some time to peek at something that was truly out of this world.

23rd Annual Boulder Shelter Golf Classic
JUNE 12, 2017
The Fox Hill Club Longmont, CO

It was a beautiful, fruitful day for the Shelter, thanks to the generous participation, contribution, and play of our committee, volunteers, sponsors and golfers. Special thanks to our Title Sponsors Cook, Bradford & Levy, LLC, and Xilinx, Inc.

New Website
We have a new website! We invite you to visit it. Let us know what you think. bouldershelter.org

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