

Helping  
Chuck Make  
a Home  
(page 4)



A Veteran's  
Visit  
(page 4)



A Volunteer  
Team  
(page 6)



"No more  
sitting on  
the floor!"  
(page 6)

## 2015 ANNUAL REPORT



HOUSEHOLD GOODS<sup>SM</sup>

*Helping People Make a Home.*

# 25 Years of Helping People Make a Home

## 1990

A simple act of kindness to help one family in need created an awareness that many families live without the most basic furniture and household goods. This set in motion a community effort to match a great need with a need to give.

When our founders Barbara and Ira Smith asked for goods and volunteers, people stepped forward. Their home was open seven days a week, and their guiding principle still stands: *Everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.*



## 2008

Household Goods hired its first employee – a part-time volunteer coordinator – to manage a growing corps of over 200 dedicated volunteers.



## 1999

The number of people seeking help and the volume of donated items quickly outgrew what the Smiths could manage at their home. Their record boxes overflowed with written requests. In order to manage the steady growth, they accepted an offer of space in St. Matthew's Methodist Church and became officially incorporated as a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit, charitable organization.



## 2004

Household Goods had grown to occupy four scattered locations, including some with no heat or running water. We consolidated into a single, centralized location at 530 Main St., convenient for our donors and volunteers and accessible for our clients. Seven years later we purchased the building, securing the space as our permanent home!

# 2015

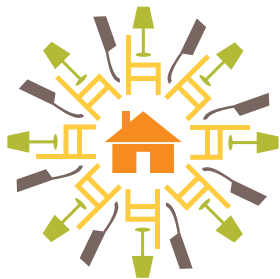
2015 marked 25 years since the Smiths opened their hearts and their home to help just one person in need. We celebrated this major milestone with a community gathering honoring the Smiths.



Barb and Ira Smith surrounded by their six children and many grandchildren.



In October, we held our first ever fundraising Gala, which was a major milestone of its own! The funds raised secured the Smiths' legacy by deepening our operating reserves and building the foundation for the future.



## 2015 at a Glance

### PEOPLE SERVED

3,931 adults • 3,407 children • 2,525 households

### DONORS

10,500 donation visits  
55,133 items provided

### AGENCIES

330 agencies referred  
people in need from  
160 towns

### VOLUNTEERS

850 volunteers contributed 37,200 hours of their time

*We are so grateful to all the donors and volunteers who made 2015 a year to celebrate!*

**These are just a few of the 330 agencies that requested help from Household Goods in 2015. They are:**

**HELPING PEOPLE WHO WERE RECENTLY HOMELESS**

Action for Boston Community Development  
Community Teamwork, Inc.  
Lowell Transitional Living Center  
Pine Street Inn  
HomeStart  
Rosie's Place

**HELPING VETERANS**

New England Center for Homeless Veterans  
VA Medical Centers in Bedford, Boston, Brockton, Fitchburg and Worcester  
VA Outpatient Programs  
VA Supportive Housing Programs  
Veterans, Inc.

**HELPING PEOPLE FLEEING DOMESTIC VIOLENCE**

REACH Beyond Domestic Violence  
GLBTQ Domestic Violence Project  
Leominster Police Dept. - Domestic Violence Unit

**HELPING CHILDREN, YOUTH OR ELDERLY IN NEED OF SERVICES**

Councils on Aging  
Children's Services of Roxbury  
Massachusetts Department of Children and Families  
The Home for Little Wanderers  
Public Schools  
Room to Grow

**HELPING PEOPLE LIVING WITH DISABILITY OR ILLNESS**

Health Leads  
Dana Farber Cancer Institute  
Boston Medical Center  
Community Health Centers  
AIDS Action Committee  
Genesis Club

**HELPING FAMILIES TRYING TO GET BY ON MINIMUM WAGE**

Housing Authorities  
Food Pantries  
Houses of Worship  
RCAP Solutions  
Montachusett Opportunity Council



Learn more about the agencies we assist by visiting our website, [www.householdgoods.org](http://www.householdgoods.org).

**OUR AGENCIES**

# How We Help

Every year Household Goods fulfills the requests of hundreds of human service organizations asking us to help their clients fill empty living spaces with the items they need most to make a home. In 2015, more than 55,000 donated items found a new individual or family to use and appreciate them.

**TREATING VETS WITH DIGNITY: JUDY**

Judy works for the VA Outpatient Clinic of Central Mass and has referred veterans to Household Goods for many years. Judy feels like Household Goods is a miracle for homeless vets who have had so little for so long, saying, "At Household Goods, vets get the dignity they deserve because they are able to choose the things that they need." Judy explains that veterans often go through hard times, and find themselves struggling. For many different reasons, people can become homeless in a matter of weeks. So many live paycheck to paycheck, and if one crushing bill comes in that can't be paid, it's all over, especially for people without access to support. Judy says, "The way I see it, it's about not turning your back on them— and you guys at Household Goods don't turn your back on anyone."



Judy and Matt choosing a sewing kit

Judy came to Household Goods with Matt, a Marine veteran who served several tours abroad. He worked as a licensed electrician, but lost everything when he lost his job. "It was hard losing my job," he said, "because I really like to work and stay busy." Now Matt is back on his feet, working again and happy to be settled into his own apartment.

**CLIENT PERSPECTIVE**

## Chuck

Chuck was raised in a loving middle-class family, excelling academically and athletically in school. On his first day at college, his mother died unexpectedly. During this time, Chuck began having symptoms of bipolar disorder, which unfortunately, went undiagnosed and untreated. Ultimately,

Chuck lost the job he loved. Unable to find another job and his savings depleted, Chuck lost his home and ended up sleeping on the streets.

After months of moving from shelter to shelter, he was accepted by Heading Home, an agency able to give him the therapeutic support he needed. This is where, as Chuck tells it, "I was able to start my recovery back to normalcy." He soon had a job and the keys to a one-bedroom apartment.

# Making a Home

## REBOUNDED AFTER AN ILLNESS: PEARL

Pearl owned her own home and worked in hospice care when the unexpected happened: a mosquito bite led to a debilitating case of West Nile virus. A long-term hospitalization and rehabilitation left her unable to work; she lost her job and her home. Pearl lived in shelters until HomeStart Boston helped her find a new place to live and referred her to Household Goods to furnish it. Pearl found everything she needed and left saying, "All the people here are so nice and accepting. I just got my keys yesterday, and now I can't wait to move in!"



"I'm so thankful to have a place like this to help people like me start their lives."

— Bonnie

**Right: Chuck still keeps the "A" stickers on the items he chose at Household Goods "as a reminder of where I have been and what I have been through." (See Cover)**



Heading Home made an appointment for Chuck at Household Goods, and his case-worker accompanied him. Chuck's apartment is now his real home, and he says he intends to do exactly what is needed so that he stays in his home for the long term.

As Chuck talks about his experience, he says, "I can assure you that getting free furniture is no small thing to someone who has been homeless. After 18 months of living in shelters, I was overjoyed to be moving out, but also terrified, because I had so much to worry about to make sure I could actually make it work. Thanks to Household Goods, I didn't need to

worry about whether I would have to sleep on the floor. So, this small thing is actually huge, and makes a big difference in people's lives."

**As he reflected on his experience at Household Goods, Chuck said, "They say that if you give a man a fish, he can eat for a day, but if you teach him to fish, he can eat for a lifetime. That's true," he added, "but only if you give him a fishing pole. The way I see it, Household Goods is giving out fishing poles."**

## OUR VOLUNTEERS

# A Community that Serves

*Household Goods simply couldn't exist without the hundreds of volunteers who give thousands of hours of their time every year to help people make a home. We always welcome new volunteers to work with us!*



### ENJOYS MATCHING NEEDS: JAN

As someone who knows exactly what is in stock at Household Goods, Jan recognizes how important it is to understand the needs and preferences of the families she assists. She often asks clients what they like to cook, so that she can make sure they leave with every kitchen tool needed to make that favorite dish. Recently Jan assisted Teresa and her daughter, Juliet. Upon hearing that they had nothing to sit on in their home, she led them to a comfy couch they loved, and Juliet exclaimed, "No more sitting on the floor!"



### WHY I VOLUNTEER: MARK

Mark says that "Household Goods is very different than most places. Volunteers gain as much as the clients do, because you know that you're contributing something very tangible to people in need. People leave with a sense of wholeness: clients and volunteers."



## ALL THE DIFFERENCE

# Volunteers Make it Happen



**Brigid and Jane, our Volunteer Coordinators, are ready to sign you up.**

Volunteers fulfill all the essential roles that keep Household Goods running. Here are just a few of the jobs they do:

- Process donations, from unloading cars to sorting, organizing and displaying items;
- Help clients find the goods and furniture they need and load their trucks;
- Work with the agencies to schedule client appointments;
- Schedule and make donation pick ups;
- Manage donation and client shifts;
- Serve on committees and the Board, work on development, write grants

Even this annual report was created by volunteers!

Gail works one shift a week accepting donations and another helping clients. "Our volunteer team has a lot of fun, and we know we're doing some real good. Household Goods has everything."

# FY2015 Results

Thanks to generous funding from individuals and organizations, 7,338 adults and children are now:



For every \$178 donated, an entire home is furnished!

| CASH TO FUND OPERATIONS        |                  |
|--------------------------------|------------------|
| Program Expenses               | \$329,400        |
| Fundraising Expenses           | 37,800           |
| Administrative Expenses        | 44,200           |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                   | <b>\$411,400</b> |
| Capital & Other Expenditures   | 38,500           |
| <b>Cash to Fund Operations</b> | <b>\$449,900</b> |

| SUPPORT & REVENUE                  |                    |
|------------------------------------|--------------------|
| Gifts, Grants, Contributions       | \$379,700          |
| In-Kind Donated Goods              | 2,120,800          |
| In-Kind Donated Services           | 966,400            |
| Other Revenue                      | 267,600            |
| <b>Total Support &amp; Revenue</b> | <b>\$3,734,500</b> |

| EXPENSES                  |                    |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Operating Costs           | \$449,900          |
| In-Kind Goods Distributed | 2,152,800          |
| In-Kind Donated Services  | 966,400            |
| <b>Total Expenses</b>     | <b>\$3,569,100</b> |



**HOUSEHOLD GOODS™**  
*Helping People Make a Home.*

*Thanks to your support, we finished 2015 more financially stable than ever before. Even so, we rely on your donations to sustain the organization and continue to help thousands of people make a home in 2016. As always, every dollar is gratefully received and carefully spent.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

### President

Mimi Deck Rutledge

### Vice President

Philip vanderWilden

### Clerk

John Fallon

### Treasurer

Priscilla Gannon

### Executive Director

Sharon Martens

### Corporate Counsel

Mary Bassett

### Directors

John Fanton

Bob Goddard

Beth Neeley Kubacki

Mark Sigman

Michael Smith

Audrey Trieschman

Jehan Wren

### Founders

Ira and Barbara Smith



“Thank you so much  
for everything.  
You have made  
our family’s life  
so beautiful!” – Cherie



### DONATE GOODS

Donations accepted  
Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays  
9am-Noon



### VOLUNTEER

Contact our Volunteer Coordinator  
978-635-1710, ext. 6 or  
volunteers@householdgoods.org



### DONATE FUNDS

Visit [www.householdgoods.org/donate](http://www.householdgoods.org/donate)  
for more information or  
to donate online



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