



REPORTS

CHAF Basics

The Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund is operated by the Cambridge Community of Realtors in a public/private partnership with the Cambridge banking community, HomeStart, the Cambridge Multi-Service Center and the Cambridge Housing Authority. CHAF provides a bridge to housing for homeless and near homeless families and individuals by assisting with the startup costs of renting an apartment and providing one time assistance grants to families at risk of becoming homeless.

CHAF is a broad-based community coalition of Realtors, civic and business leaders, universities, local banks, and concerned citizens pulling together to break the cycle of homelessness. Since its inception in 1999, CHAF has raised \$1.1 million, enough to open doors for more than 1,300 households.

CHAF Jazz Night Benefits Homeless as Musicians Make Smooth Jam

On Friday, Sept. 28, CHAF hosted its 9th Annual Benefit Concert for the Homeless at Sanders Theatre in Harvard Square. This year's concert featured Freddy Cole, legendary jazz musician and brother of the late Nat King Cole, along with Detroit Diva Kathy Kosins and legendary soul/jazz saxophonist Red Holloway.

Inside Sanders Theatre, the mood was feisty and sonic - its yawning recesses providing much aurean ambiance for both musician, and jazz enthusiast alike. Playing as if possessed, Freddy and company put on a show for the ages. Pleading through every passionate note, Cole, Kosins and Holloway powerfully



Freddy Cole
-photo by Clay Walker

proclaimed that homelessness be stamped out here in Cambridge - and beyond.

"We are extremely fortunate to have had Freddy Cole and his friends perform at our benefit concert. Freddy was just inducted into the Georgia Music Hall of Fame earlier this month, and he's won count-

less awards and accolades for his unique voice and musical excellence," said David Pap, volunteer Director of CHAF, which used the concert as a focus for its fundraising efforts.

Naomi Sweitzer, Assistant Executive Director for HomeStart, Inc., one of CHAF's partners, said "I've seen a lot of positive change in the city because of CHAF. CHAF breaks down some of the last barriers to having a home for homeless or near homeless people - by providing the funds to assist them with securing housing."

-edited from Chris Gendron story in Spare Change

Cambridge Trust Leads CHAF to 2007 Triumph



Joseph V. Roller II, President & CEO of Cambridge Trust Company

CHAF is very proud to report that The Cambridge Trust Company has led the homeless outreach organization to its best year ever, reaching \$175,000 in total contributions as of De-

cember 1st with the potential of reaching \$185,000 by year end. Joseph Roller, President and CEO, who acted as CHAF's 2007 Benefit Chair, expressed his organization's excitement as the campaign comes to a close: "The bar was set high for this 2007 fundraising event. Our goal of \$175,000 was a stretch but achievable. In the end, regardless of the final tally, we can take pride in knowing that our collective efforts will assist more than 200 homeless and near homeless families in our community find permanent homes along with safety, security and dignity.

Cambridge Savings to Lead CHAF Campaign in 2008

Robert M. Wilson, President & CEO of Cambridge Savings Bank, will chair CHAF's 2008 fundraising campaign. Cambridge Savings has been a supporter of CHAF's mission since its founding in 1999.

"At Cambridge Savings we look forward to leading CHAF's 2008 fundraising effort to help Cambridge families break the cycle of homelessness," said Wilson. "We are deeply committed to improving the quality of life and contributing to the social good of the communities we serve."

Mr. Wilson has over 25 years experience in banking and has been a long-time supporter of



Robert Wilson, President & CEO of Cambridge Savings Bank organizations that create solutions for local problems. Cambridge Savings is one of the oldest community banks in Massachusetts with a commitment to community action on critical issues that affect the quality of people's lives.

December 2007

Dear CHAF Supporter,

I was fleeing a domestic violence situation. I was left homeless for four years and had lost my children and was struggling with an alcohol and drug addiction. I was spiritually, mentally, and physically drained and felt defeated.

I had a desire to change and reached out for help. I began with asking my Lord Jesus for help and that was the beginning of my journey to recovery. God started placing people on my path and one of them was CHAF.

I had a lot of challenges up ahead of me. I found it difficult staying at shelters and going into the streets early each morning. Because of CHAF, I was able to secure housing and to have a safe place to lay my head, work on my recovery and re-build the relationship that was severed with all three of my children.

Today I have custody of all three of my children. CHAF has been a key piece to the foundation I build my life on. I am able to give my time to the elderly, serving lunches and talking about their journeys and I'm also able to help out other organizations.

CHAF has been a blessing to me and my children. I now have a three bedroom home to provide my children with a healthy, safe place to learn and grow. I appreciate the simple things, such as sitting around with my children watching a movie, talking and laughing. We go for walks, my son has sleepovers, and I am able to be active in all areas of my children's' lives today.

Just recently I took my two sons to their first Red Sox game. To watch the joy on their faces was priceless. In September I saw my daughter off to college with a heart full of gratitude to have gotten to be there for her accomplishments and this milestone in her life.

Today I look forward to a future of being able to make a difference in the lives of others. I would like to go back to school to study psychology and human services and continue to share hope and inspiration with others. Today I am no longer that defeated woman. I give all glory to God and the people he placed along my path, CHAF being one.

Thank you,

Carol Pooler



Carol Pooler,
formerly homeless

CHAF supporters at the pre-concert reception at the Regattabar at the Charles Hotel on September 29th, 2007.



Joseph V. Roller II, President & CEO of Cambridge Trust Company, signs a BIG check to help homeless families



John Angier, manager of Coldwell Banker Mass Ave, left, Sal Savarese of Cambridge Trust Company & Bruce Embry of Clark, Hunt & Embry.



New CHAF Sponsor Doug Hanna, of S&H Construction



Mayor Ken Reeves, right, with Paul Turcotte of RE/MAX Destiny & Joe Roller in background.



Naomi Swietzer of HomeStart, left, Gene Foley, President & CEO of Harvard Employee Credit Union & Rhonda Black



Paula Kreutzer left, with Andreas Kreutzer & Lois Brunet, Coldwell Banker & CHAF Board members



From left, front row: CHAF recipient Carol Pooler & her son with CHAF Board members Jean LeVaux, Ilona Kuphal, Chair Joseph Roller, Samara Grossman, Susan LaPierre & Barbara Ford; 2d & 3d rows: Andreas Kreutzer, Gene Foley, Paul Turcotte, Lois Brunet, Dan Malis, Rob Siegrist, John Angier, Tony Troiano, & CHAF Director David Pap.

Samara Grossman Thanks CHAF for Tikkun Olam at Fall Reception

It is an honor to be part of this CHAF community, this community that is changing the world. That may sound like an exaggeration, but I truly don't feel that it is.

Let me show you why:

When you go home tonight, after a wonderful evening of good company, good food and drink, AND good music, what will be the first thing that you do? Flop down on the couch and greet your spouse, children, or pets? Grab a little nighttime snack from the fridge? Get a glass of water and take a good long hot shower? What if instead I told you that tonight you had nowhere to go? That your bed was going to be the Cambridge common bushes on the left side of the fence? That your next meal was dependent on the generosity of others? That your next shower was the bathroom in a supermarket?

What if I then said you have the power to ensure that no one in Cambridge has to go home to that?

In fact, you do have that power, because I have seen it in action. I have the honor of managing some of the funds that you so carefully raise. I see where CHAF contributions go and I want to tell you again, by contributing to CHAF, you are making a difference in this world.

Let me show you how: You know that it only takes \$670 to prevent a family from becoming homeless.

But did you know that also gave our client Susan the chance to sit with her daughter and help her with her homework- a chance she feared she would lose forever because Social Service said they would adopt her daughter out if she didn't find a home for them to live in soon. It gave her peace of mind and a chance to raise her daughter without fear.

It gave Dave a chance to come home at night and feed his cat, to read his favorite books and call his grown children

and tell them to come over for dinner next Saturday. It gave him dignity and self respect.

It gave Rita, who is recovering from an abusive relationship, a safe space to call home. She can rest knowing that she holds the keys to her door and her future. It gave her the chance to start over.



Samara Grossman of HomeStart

I also believe you are changing the world in a way that is beyond the material. I am Jewish, and I have always been intrigued by one particular belief that is held by some in Judaism – one that I want to share with you tonight, because I think it is so relevant.

There is a belief that God contracted divinity to make room for creation. During that contraction, it is said that the divine went into special vessels as light, some of which shattered and scattered from the effects. It is said that the scattered shards are us, and our souls are the light. There is a term in Judaism; some of you may know it--called Tikkun Olam, or repair of the world. This term reflects the belief that humanity's great task is to

find and free the divine light in the shards, thereby restoring the world to balance. The best way to do this, to repair the world, is said to be through social action.

So, I believe that tonight you have performed Tikkun Olam - your generous support of CHAF has made it possible for many Cantibridgians to find a place to call home. And more than that, you have made it possible for people to find their own light again--light they can then share with the world. The world is a changed place, a better place because of your efforts, your Tikkun Olam.

I am again honored to be able to introduce you to one woman and her incredible story – a story which demonstrates the ways in which support of CHAF truly changes lives. Please (read the letter on page 2) as Carol Pooler talks to you of repair, of hope and courage and light. Please know that your support of CHAF helped to make it possible.

Cambridge Club Hosts CHAF Panel

On November 5th, the venerable 128-year-old Cambridge Club hosted the Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund at the Harvard Faculty Club in Harvard Square. The evening featured dinner, discussion, and questions about the causes and solutions to homelessness in Massachusetts.

Club president Warren “Renny” Little, opened the evening by warmly welcoming all in attendance and emphasizing that part of the Cambridge Club’s mission is to stay close to the critical issues that can improve life in Cambridge. He emphasized that many members had expressed considerable interest in the work that organizations such as CHAF do in helping people in trouble to get back on

their feet.

David Pap, CHAF’s Director, followed with a discussion of how a group of entrepreneurial Realtors had raised \$1,000,000 plus in a short nine years to address the problem of helping families and individuals to break the cycle of homelessness.

Highlighting the evening were remarks by Linda Wood-Boyle, the Executive Director of HomeStart, CHAF’s partner organization that has shown critical success both in transitioning people from shelters to homes, and in homelessness prevention.

“We have come a long way as a community over the years in understanding the key components to solving this problem of both ending people’s homelessness

CHAF SALUTES NEW SPONSOR S&H CONSTRUCTION

CHAF thanks Doug Hanna & Alex Slive of S&H Construction, one of Cambridge premiere renovation specialists, for contributing \$5,000 to CHAF, enough to help 6 families move from shelters to homes. “It’s important for all of us who thrive & prosper in Cambridge to find ways to give back & help our neighbors need,” said Hanna. “CHAF does an excellent job of helping at risk families to find or retain their housing.”



**YOU CAN HELP BREAK THE CYCLE
OF HOMELESSNESS**

**Donate online at www.CHAFund.org
Or, send your donation to CHAF,
PO Box 381332, Cambridge, MA 02238**

HARVARD UNIVERSITY SPONSORS CONCERT AND RECEPTION

Harvard University has once again generously sponsored CHAF’s fall fundraisers by graciously providing Sanders Theatre at Harvard’s Memorial Hall and underwriting the cost

of the pre-concert reception. CHAF extends its warmest thanks to Alan Stone, Mary Ann Jarvis and Mary Power in the Office of Community Affairs for their continued support.

THANKS DAVID, WELCOME KEVIN



New CHAF Director Kevin Sheehan, left, with CHAF Board Chair David Pap

member to various non profits such as Pas-sim Cultural Center in Harvard Square.

“It is a privilege to serve this organization that has helped so many,” Sheehan explained. “Helping

The Cambridge Housing Assistance Fund is proud to announce that David Pap, who co-founded the organization in 1999 and has been its volunteer executive director for the entire nine years of its operation, will become CHAF’s Chairman of the Board. CHAF welcomes its new executive director, Kevin Sheehan, to the organization as of December 1st.

“After nine years directing CHAF, I feel it is time to pass the torch,” said Pap. “It has been gratifying to watch CHAF grow and I thank everyone for their participation. I look forward to working with the board to continue CHAF’s mission to break the cycle of homelessness. Kevin Sheehan brings a wide range of skills and experience to the position as well as a firm commitment to helping the homeless. He’ll do a good job moving CHAF forward.”

Sheehan, an award-winning Cambridge Realtor, has just completed a book on the spirit of leadership *A Leader Becomes a Leader: Inspirational Stories of Leadership for a New Generation* that has had a warm reception around the country. He is the founder of Starbucks Hear Music (“The Voice of Starbucks”) and has served as a consultant and board

homeless individuals and families off the street and into homes is a sparkling legacy that CHAF has created in partnership with HomeStart. Our job moving forward will be to amplify the reach of the organization and to continue to build the network of Cambridge citizens who are involved in making this critical solution happen every day.”

The volunteer board and team of volunteers that guide CHAF consist of concerned citizens, civic and business leaders, and non-profit experts from a variety of disciplines. Dan Malis, a prominent Cambridge real estate attorney who has been instrumental in helping build the organization described David Pap’s legacy this way:

“Without David, this organization simply would not exist. We have been blessed to have had critical contributions from an important group of individuals, Realtors, banks, business leaders, and other contributors. But one leader, at the end of the day, needs to do the heavy lifting. In concert with a group of very talented people, David has led an effort that has raised more than \$1,000,000 and housed some 1200 individuals and families. Thank you.”



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2007 Benefit Chair

Joseph V. Roller II, President & CEO
Cambridge Trust Company

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Antony Troiano, P.C.

www.CHAFund.org

Thanks to our Friends & Sponsors
the 9th Annual Benefit Concert
raised \$175,000 to help the homeless!

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Cambridge Club

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and by preventing their displacement in the first place" she explained. "By providing targeted, expert housing search and comprehensive follow-up services, we have been tremendously successful in assisting folks to move into and retain permanent, affordable housing."

"The element we found missing in our process was a check," she emphasized, "first month's rent, last month's rent, and security deposit. You get to the end of these steps in the process and people face this final, often prohibitive barrier. They need help with the 'upfront' costs associated with moving into an apartment—and that's where CHAF comes in and has been a critical partner in closing the loop."

"In addition to the assistance with ending homelessness, CHAF funds are essential in our work in preventing homelessness. Often we see folks who are very low income, barely making ends meet who are in danger of losing their housing because of one isolated but unexpected additional expense. It could be a day without pay to care for a sick child or aging parent, unexpected medical bills or a temporary work lay off. Often the amount of funds needed to fill the gap and enable a family to maintain their housing is minimal, and this is where CHAF funds are crucial."

Little closed by saying, "Club members are all involved in volunteer activities in the City and appreciate hearing from fellow members about efforts to make Cambridge a better place in which to live."

CHAF THANKS
AMBIT PRESS
FOR DONATING
THE PRINTING OF
THIS NEWSLETTER.