



# Midwest Shelter For Homeless Veterans



July 2012

Serving those who served the nation

## MSHV names new Director of Operations Focus on “expanding Shelter’s ability to serve”



FOUNDED BY  
BOB ADAMS &  
DIRK ENGER



NAMED IN HONOR OF  
MARINE LCPL  
NICHOLAS LARSON  
(1984-2004)



NAMED IN HONOR OF  
ARMY STAFF SGT.  
ROBERT MILLER  
(1983-2008)

**MSHV**  
119 N. WEST STREET  
WHEATON, IL 60187  
630-871-8387  
WWW.  
HELPAVETERAN.ORG

The Midwest Shelter has hired **Pamela A. Kostecki** as its new Director of Operations and Grants Management. Pam, who has her Masters in Social Work from Aurora University, has been managing homeless programs for over 20 years. She comes to MSHV after a long career at Catholic Charities, Diocese of Joliet.

“We are thrilled to have Pam join our team,” said **Bob Adams**, MSHV co-founder and current board president. “We are impressed by her enthusiasm, her strong track record in serving the homeless and her commitment to providing services for veterans.”

Pam, who started on May 3, is looking to develop new partnerships for MSHV in DuPage County including, but not limited to, veteran-owned businesses. In addition, Pam has already secured her first foundation grant award for the Shelter and has worked to obtain some additional in-kind support, including donations of tech support, software and office furniture.

“I am blessed to have the opportunity to work with such incredible people here at MSHV and I look forward to serving our nation’s veterans,” explained Pam. “It is egregious that these American heroes who fought for all of our freedom, would be left with no choice but the streets.”



“My focus is on expanding the Shelter’s ability to serve more veterans in need in our community.”

Pam replaces former Executive Director **Anita Dierks**, who left MSHV to take a position as Housing Director at Community Housing Advocacy and Development (CHAD).

### Pam’s priorities...

New MSHV Director of Operations **Pam Kostecki** is working to grow and expand MSHV’s programs. Some of her top priorities include:

- ✍ Updating MSHV’s Strategic Plan
- ✍ Developing a new Brand Strategy and Key Messaging Platform
- ✍ Developing additional funding and grant opportunities
- ✍ Evaluating MSHV’s current organizational structure
- ✍ Expanding the MSHV Board
- ✍ Expanding the Shelter’s capacity
- ✍ Expanding MSHV’s ability to provide work space to veterans in the community
- ✍ Expanding outreach efforts and community relationships/partners
- ✍ Revising and implementing new employee guidelines
- ✍ Filling the Miller Home
- ✍ Completing the construction project on the Larson Home

## Miller Home welcomes its first residents

On June 1, the Midwest Shelter welcomed the first of three veterans now residing in its recently completed Robert J. Miller Home, which offers affordable housing to qualified veterans.

“Housing is the number one financial issue facing middle- to low-income people in the United States,” explained MSHV Director of Operations **Pam Kostecki**. “It only makes sense for MSHV to join in the provision of affordable housing for veterans here in DuPage County.”

“In Illinois, a household must earn, on average, more than \$35,000 a year to comfortably afford a two-bedroom apartment,” she added. “When we realized that the average income of our veterans upon discharge is just over half that amount, we knew we had to take action.”



Located at 111 N. West St. in downtown Wheaton, MSHV’s Robert Miller Home provides affordable housing to qualified veterans. The home is named in honor of Medal of Honor recipient and Wheaton North High School Graduate, Robert J. Miller.



Unit 1 houses a disabled veteran. This unit has a first-floor handi-cap-accessible bedroom and bath.



Unit 2 houses the only female veteran. She has many Army Commendation Medals and awards for her stellar service to our country.



The veteran in Unit 3 is a graduate of MSHV’s Nicholas Larson Home. He tells his story on page 2.

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**A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT****Shelter keeps moving forward**

Greetings from the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans.

This has been an exciting first half of the year. With the opening of the SSGT Robert J. Miller Housing for Veterans, MSHV moves into the next phase of its mission to serve those who served the nation. Affordable housing is not easy to come by for anyone in DuPage County, and veterans are no exception. We are proud to be providing this service.

We bid farewell to our longtime Executive Director, **Anita Dierks**, who moved to a director's position at Community Housing Advocacy and Development (CHAD) of DuPage. It is a great opportunity and we wish her well and thank her for all her hard work on behalf of the Shelter.

We welcomed our new Director of Operations and Grants, **Pamela Kostecki**. Pam came to us from a long career working for Catholic Charities of Joliet (see page 1).

She has a wide variety of professional experience and we are grateful she is bringing that experience to MSHV.

We are moving forward on a series of initiatives, including starting a weekly daytime outreach to the homeless of DuPage County (where one out of three is a veteran), bringing food, water, clothing, toiletries and referral information to those in need. Continue to watch this space for more of what we are planning.

And speaking of those in need, the single greatest need for veterans in general, and our residents in particular, continues to be finding quality jobs that can sustain an individual or a family. There is a new law that **Gov. Pat Quinn** signed in June that offers help to veterans and military families in need of employment, and we have high hopes for this legislation.

But here at MSHV, we work on a grassroots level to find companies

to hire our guys. We have been tremendously grateful for Morey of Bolingbrook, headed by **Jay Morey**, and VSGI of Oakbrook Terrace, headed by our friend and benefactor, **Rick Harbour**, for hiring our residents.

But everyone can't work these particular jobs, and we are asking that if you know of opportunities locally, or if you own a company willing and able to hire a hard working hero, you contact us. Your help in this way really moves the ball downfield towards independence for one of our men.

We hope you are having a wonderful summer. Thanks again for all you do to support the Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans.

Sincerely,

*Doc Adams*

**FROM A RESIDENT'S POINT OF VIEW****MSHV helps to "build lives back up after hard times"**

I recently had the honor of being accepted as the first resident of the Staff Sgt. Robert J. Miller house.

My journey began last December when I was accepted into the MSHV's transitional housing program (The Nicholas Larson Home) and I utilized the resources they provided to gain employment and begin the path to financial and emotional stability.

As the house construction progressed on the Miller Home, I expressed interest in becoming a resident and the staff at MSHV developed a plan for me to make the transition.

The process was very similar to any other housing application. I had to provide all appropriate documents, including proof of income, past housing references and personal references.

As construction approached completion on the Miller Home, I was also progressing in my personal development program and June 1 was selected as my move-in date. After reviewing all the details of the lease and making a few minor modifications, Pam and I signed the lease and I made my first



month's rent and security deposit. It was nice that I was able to put some items in storage in the garage until move-in day. Just prior to moving in, a few last-minute touch-ups were completed and arrangements were made for window coverings and laundry hook up.

MSHV also referred me to a wonderful group in Downers Grove called Shared Connections, which provided me with quality household furnishings, for a fee of only \$50. This was a wonderful surprise as I was planning to live bare bones and slowly furnish my new place. Instead, on moving day I

was able to pick up a complete bedroom, living room and dining room set. With some help from friends at work and residents at MSHV, the task of getting everything up to the third floor went smoothly.

I felt the biggest challenge for me would be the transition from constant human contact at the Shelter to the isolation of being the only resident in a huge house. The staff and residents at the shelter have helped in this matter by inviting me to join them for dinner on occasion. I also stop in a few times a week to use the computer and pick up mail. The Shelter also provides food staples and cleaning supplies. Two new residents have just moved in to the Miller house and we often chat and are getting to know each other.

Without the Miller Home housing I would likely have fallen victim to the many slumlords who so often take advantage of people who are trying to build their lives back up after hard times. I appreciate the continued support offered to me in my recovery as well.

*By A Resident of MSHV's Miller Home*

# MSHV reaches out to find, assist homeless

Most people familiar with the Midwest Shelter are aware that MSHV provides transitional housing along with a comprehensive array of services to help veterans out of homelessness and back to useful, productive lives. And with the opening of its Robert J. Miller Home in June, word is getting out that MSHV now also offers affordable housing to qualified veterans in our community.

Perhaps less known are the outreach efforts that both MSHV staff and residents engage in on a weekly basis to help find and assist homeless men, women and children living on the streets in DuPage County.

MSHV started its weekly outreach mission in 2009, when MSHV staff, in concert with the DuPage Continuum of Care, joined the annual street count and learned how rampant the homeless issue was.

"My thought at the time was that counting people one night a year was just not enough," recalled MSHV's **Bob Adams**. "My message to the staff

and residents of the Larson home was that we needed to do more."

Together, the MSHV Larson Home staff and residents developed a regular weekly initiative to reach out to the homeless people living on the streets in Wheaton and surrounding areas. The MSHV outreach team often travels to locations that MSHV residents formerly frequented or to places, based on tips from local police, where transient people are attempting to reside.

**Outreach Mission: Monday, June 18, 2012**

Based on the heat index, the MSHV staff person on duty prepared a cooler and other essentials to ensure that both the outreach team and those they encountered would stay hydrated. The MSHV crew headed from Wheaton to Warrenville. Along the way, two individuals, who appeared to be homeless, were observed on the front steps of a church.

The MSHV residents approached the men, one of whom had some rather serious leg injuries from

falling off his bike, and learned that the men were indeed homeless and had been "lotto-ed out" from staying at the PADS shelter in the church that night.

The outreach team engaged the gentlemen, providing them with water, hygiene materials and other needed items and completed outreach surveys with them. The men were grateful for the help and agreed to show the team an abandoned trailer behind a former concrete factory where they had been spending their nights.

The team left the men with the knowledge that people cared about them and offered them referrals to programs that may be able to help them.

So far in 2012, MSHV has provided outreach services to more than 40 homeless people in DuPage County and another 225 homeless people in our secondary outreach efforts to reach veterans in the surrounding community.

## Want to Help The Midwest Shelter?

### The Miller Home needs:

- Shelving for Storage
- Clothing Racks
- Towels & Wash Cloths
- Pots/Pans/Kitchenware
- Small Furniture (lamps, chairs, end tables, small dinette sets, etc.)

### The Larson Home needs:

- Men's Clothing Suitable For Job Interviews
- Gift Cards (Grocery Stores, Gas Stations, Convenience Stores)
- Postage Stamps

Contact MSHV @ 630-871-VETS (8387) or pam@mshv.org

## Homeownership Center honors Bob Adams

The DuPage Homeownership Center (DHOC) presented its 2012 Robert Christ Award to MSHV co-founder and board president Bob "Doc" Adams in a ceremony on June 5. The Christ Award is presented annually to an individual who is making substantial contributions to affordable housing in DuPage County. It is named in honor of the Center's founding board president, Robert Christ, who was a leading affordable housing activist.

www.helpaveteran.org



I am making a donation to MSHV in the amount of:

\$1,000 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$250 \_\_\_\_\_

\$100 \_\_\_\_\_ \$50 \_\_\_\_\_ \$35 \_\_\_\_\_

Other Amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Use your credit card to donate online at [www.helpaveteran.org](http://www.helpaveteran.org)

### JULY 2012 DONATION SLIP

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this completed donation slip along with a check payable to:

The Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans  
119 N. West Street  
Wheaton, IL 60187

The Midwest Shelter is a 501(c) (3) charitable organization and all donations are tax deductible as permitted by law.

## 7th annual MSHV Golf Outing & BBQ to take place on Sun., Aug. 26 @ Klein Creek Golf Club

Make sure that you are part of the fun and register now for the Midwest Shelter For Homeless Veterans 7th Annual Golf Outing and Texas BBQ being held on Sunday, Aug. 26 at **Klein Creek Golf Club**, located at 1N333 Pleasant Hill Rd. in Winfield.

Eighteen holes of golf, in a team scramble format, begins at 1 p.m. with a shotgun start. A complete Texas BBQ buffet dinner follows golf at 6 p.m.

"This is our fourth straight year at Klein Creek," said Event Director **Tim Stanley**, who also serves on the MSHV board. "Every year our goal is to combine good golf, good fun and good food for a great cause. And every year, the event just gets better and better.

"We limit the event to 36 foursomes, so we encourage everyone to sign up now," added Tim. "Buying hole



The 7th Annual MSHV Golf Outing And BBQ will be held on Sun., Aug. 26 at beautiful Klein Creek Golf Club in Winfield.

sponsorships and raffle tickets are two more great ways for people to show their support of veterans. And we also invite friends and family to join us for our post-golf BBQ dinner, which always gets rave reviews."

Golfers can register online @ [www.helpaveteran.org](http://www.helpaveteran.org) or by using the registration form on page 5. The fee for 18 holes of golf and the Texas BBQ dinner is \$500 for a foursome and \$125 for an individual golfer.

For additional information or to sponsor a hole please contact **Tim Stanley** at [tim5522@comcast.net](mailto:tim5522@comcast.net) or **312-953-4126** or **Pam Kostecki** at the Shelter at [pam@mshv.org](mailto:pam@mshv.org) or **630-871-VETS (8387)**.

## Place of Angels shares Bob Adams' Vietnam experience and raises more than \$9,000 for the Midwest Shelter

"Place of Angels," Bob Adams' Vietnam memoir, was staged on May 21 at the College of DuPage's McAninch Arts Center in a performance that raised \$9,000 to support the Midwest Shelter.

Veteran New York actor Jeff Still's riveting performance shared Bob's compelling and touching story of his time as a Navy corpsman serving alongside Marines amid intense combat in Vietnam.

Jeff took the audience along on a journey that evoked both tears and laughter along with admiration for the strong bonds that those in combat develop with one another.



"Relationships are key to our survival and they are what got us through our service to this country" said **Jim Tucker**, a combat buddy of Bob's who is featured in "Place of Angels," and who made the trip from his home on the East Coast to see the play.

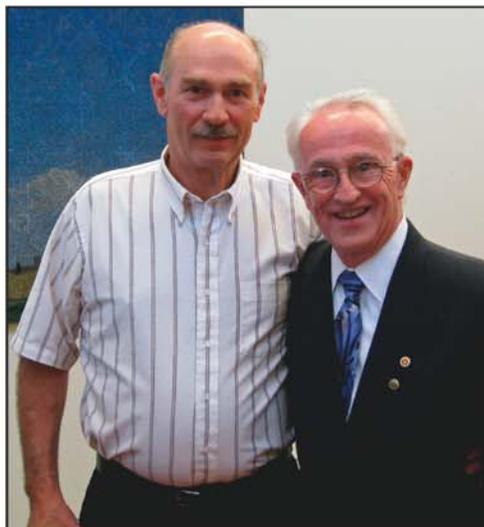
"Everyone in the audience was touched by the profound nature of the fight for our freedom that every combat veteran has made," said **Pam Kostecki**, MSHV's Dir. of Operations. "Their sacrifice for our freedom has been so great. The rest of us need to support them in any way we can."

### Reunion of "Brothers" Makes For Special Night

An intense scene in "Place of Angels" occurs when Navy Corpsman **Bob "Doc" Adams** administers battlefield first aid to his best friend in the war, **Jim Tucker**, who had parts of his elbow and hip torn away in a mortar attack.

After Vietnam, Bob had no contact with Jim or his other battlefield comrades for more than 30 years. So the May 21 performance of "Place Of Angels" was made even more meaningful as Jim, now a carpenter, sat in the audience, watching the play for the very first time.

**At right:** Jim (far left) in Vietnam with his fellow Marines. **Below left:** Jim (left) with Bob the night of the play; **Below right:** Jim (right) and Bob in front of the Larson Home.





## Golf Registration Form

### 7<sup>th</sup> Annual Golf Outing and BBQ

### Klein Creek Golf Club, Winfield

### Sunday, Aug. 26, 2012

**Golf Registration: \$125 per person, \$500 per foursome (includes 18 holes of golf & BBQ dinner)**

Sign up and pay for your foursome at the time of registration, online at [www.helpaveteran.org](http://www.helpaveteran.org) or send your completed registration form and check payable to:

**Midwest Shelter for Homeless Veterans**

Attention: Tim Stanley  
119 N. West Street  
Wheaton, IL 60187

**Golf Foursome Registration: (Limited Space to First 144 Golfers)**

1. (captain\*) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
 (captain's email address): \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\*The Captain is responsible for organizing the foursome.

**Golf Individual Registration:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

**BBQ Dinner Only Reservation: (Limited Space)**

I will not be golfing, but would like to attend the Barbeque Dinner: \$50 (includes dinner and dessert)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

(List all guests w/email) \_\_\_\_\_

I can't join you for the event, but I want to support this great cause.  
 Enclosed is my donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 (for tax purposes, please provide name & address information below)

**Event Details:**

- Sunday, August 26th, 2012; Golf: 1:00 pm Shotgun Start; 6:00 pm Texas BBQ Dinner.
- Klein Creek Golf Club, 1N333 Pleasant Hill Rd, Winfield, IL 60190 (630-690-0101)
- For additional information, contact Tim Stanley at **312-953-4126** or email: **tim5522@comcast.net**

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**Sunday, Aug. 26**  
Klein Creek Golf Club  
Register Now!  
Sponsors Welcome  
[www.helpaveteran.org](http://www.helpaveteran.org)

## **Did you know....**

**... that MSHV does outreach each week?** We have located and reached out to more than 100 homeless people living on the streets of DuPage County since we began this program in 2009.

**... that MSHV takes part in the Wheaton Memorial Day Parade?** We also pay our respects to Marine LCpl. Nicholas Larson by laying a wreath on his grave. We thank him for his service to the nation and we are proud to call our house at 119 N. West St. the Nicholas Larson Home.

**... that MSHV solicits donations at the DuPage County Building Trades Annual Golf Outing?** We staff a "betting hole" and raised \$1,118 from this event in 2011.

**... that one out of every three homeless men has put on a uniform and served this country?** That's according to the National Coalition For Homeless Veterans.



## **Better keep an eye on these kids: Sixth year of raising money for local veterans**

Well, those darn kids were at it again, just like they promised. For the sixth consecutive year, a group of hard-working young people staffed a lemonade stand alongside the Wheaton Memorial Day Parade route to raise money for the Midwest Shelter. This year these young patriots raised more than \$500 in support of our local veterans in need. We applaud their efforts and look forward to watching them in the years to come. Way to go!