



The Open Door

From the Director



Fr. Eric Schimmel, C.S.C.

Happy Lent.

As we continue in this season of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, one thing I have focused on during Lent is gratitude. Although we continue to see a high demand for our services, we also see reasons for hope and hints of resurrection in the midst of a place people would label a land of crosses. Since our last newsletter, a few of our guests who had been regulars at our Hospitality Center have moved on, now in their own places. We also have had some success stories from our transitional houses on Polk St. Talking with some of them, they expressed gratitude to us. More importantly, they expressed gratitude to the Lord, who carried His cross for us, for helping them carry a particular cross of homelessness. We continue to ask the same Lord to help us and the people we serve as

they continue to carry their crosses.

André House remains a work of the community, supported by many of you who give of your time, share your talents, and make the donations that keep us running. Thank you for all of your prayers and support. On **April 22**, we will have a **Volunteer Appreciation Mass and potluck**. The Mass will be at 10:00am with a potluck to follow. Of course this Mass and potluck is a way to say thank you to all of you; but this April the Board and Core Staff want to take some time to recognize a couple of volunteers who have helped us almost from the beginning. It is not fair to say who those people may be in the newsletter – you have to come on April 22 to find out!

As some of you know, we have been working on our website this year. The most recent addition to our website – www.andrehouse.org – is the ability to donate online. Under the Donate button, you can find a link for financial contributions. Yes, you are now just a click away from making a credit card donation to André House via **PayPal**. [A PayPal account is not required to donate.] Thank you to those who have already done so. We encourage other people to try this safe and easy way to support us financially. Of course you can still make a payment with a check or cash as we still accept those donation types (and I believe you will find an envelope with this newsletter to help you do so). We also know that MANY people support us with their prayers. You can never overestimate the power of prayer. Thank you for the prayer support, too, and know we feel it making a difference.

During this holy season of Lent, André House has the privilege of hosting four different groups of college students who will be here on their **Spring Break**. We had great groups here in the beginning of January from King's College and Bridgewater State College, and now are blessed to have groups from St. Anselm College, Emmanuel College, St. Edward's University and Stonehill College. Their enthusiasm and zeal are uplifting – and their willingness to jump in and help wherever allows us to get some needed Spring cleaning and other projects done.

One disappointment this year comes from a need to suspend the **Niños program**. Reviewing things at the beginning of the calendar year, we decided that we needed to make some changes for the safety and protection of the children. In the past year, some children stopped coming to the Niños program (many had moved) while others started. Desiring to have updated contact information and a relationship with responsible adults in the family, we went door to door with new Emergency Contact forms for the children as well as other information about the program. In order to participate in the program, we asked that an adult give us the form so that, in case of an emergency, not only would we know who to contact, but the family would know who we are as well. Over a month later, no one returned a form.

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We Found Love at André House

-by Alicia Padilla

During winter break we had a group of students from King's College spend a week with us at André House. During their time here they made up a song about how much they loved André House by changing the words to the song "We Found Love in a Hopeless Place" to "We Found Love at André House."

This inspired me to look up the lyrics, and I found that much of the song did relate to André House. Following are the lyrics and how I think they pertain to André House:



"Yellow diamonds in the light"

This is the staff, guests, and volunteers. We are God's precious creations and like "Yellow diamonds in the light" we reflect God's love.

"And we're standing side by side"

This is us...the staff, guests, and volunteers... living and working together, side by side.

"As your shadow crosses mine"

Our paths and lives cross and intertwine with others without us being totally aware of it, much like our shadows can when walking past a stranger.

"What it takes to come alive"

Our interactions and relationships with one another are how we come alive in God's love.

"It's the way I'm feeling I just can't deny. But I've gotta let it go"

We often have feelings that cannot be denied, and we need to let go of our prejudices, stereotypes, and assumptions about anyone who is different from us.

"We found love in a hopeless place"

I know for myself and others, when we think of some of the challenges our guests deal with on a daily basis such as: homelessness, unemployment, many temptations and addiction of drugs and alcohol, lack of support or community, violence, mental or emotional illness, discrimination and other injustices, we think of them as if they are hopeless or in a hopeless situation. However, from my time at André House I have found it to be just the opposite. I have found most of our guests have more love, hope, and faith than one could ever imagine. If one of our guests are asked how they are, the most popular answer you will get is, "I'm blessed."

I have found more love at André House than I ever could have imagined! I have fallen in love at André House with the ministry, my fellow staff members, guests, and volunteers. I have also fallen in love with God's blessings that He has brought, the trials I have faced, the lessons I have learned, and the bathrooms I have cleaned.

"Shine a light through an open door"

The André House logo is "an open door," and with the work we do here, Christ's light shines through it.

"Love and life I will divide"

This is what hate and injustice do, they divide. When you remove love from life, you cannot truly live.

"Turn away cause I need you more"

This is a plea to turn away from the norms of society to help those who need us more, the poor.

"Feel the heartbeat in my mind"

The constant reminder of what we are to do: *Love one another as God loves us.*

Doctoring 101

-by Joseph Canarie



I was recently blessed with the news that I have been accepted to medical school. I have felt a vocational calling to medicine ever since I can remember, and it seems impossible to think I will actually start this fall. Yet, in many ways I often feel in my day-to-day life at André House that medical school has already begun. Many of the tasks we do here are great practice for someone entering the medical field: learning how to begin conversations with guests who appear to be having conversations with thin air, delivering bad news, cleaning up biohazardously-messy bathrooms, running for juice to prevent a guest's diabetic seizure, and washing and bandaging blistered feet are all very clinical aspects of a typical day at André House. The most important lesson for me, however, the one I feel will truly make me a better doctor, has been learning how to *not* do.

At André House we describe our work first and foremost as a ministry of hospitality and presence. I struggle with this "ministry of presence" concept. I often find myself in "doctor mode," wanting to go in and make things better. Most times, however, I cannot. Other times, a guest may not want

the help we can provide. In these situations, all we can offer is our presence.

A recent conversation with a fellow Core Staff member helped me be more at peace with this concept. "It's just as important to know what we are *not* and what we do *not* do as it is to know what we are and what we do," she said. There is a peace that comes with accepting her words. I have learned that outside of addressing basic needs like hunger and thirst, nakedness and loneliness, we are not fixers. We cannot singlehandedly cure psychosis, or end addiction, or find housing for every guest who needs it. What we can do is be present to and try, in our small way, to uphold the human dignity of each guest we encounter.

While this whole "presence" concept sounds very simple and easy (I just show-up, right?), I find that it is often difficult for me to be genuinely present. I have found that being present requires energy and effort. Little things like body language, walking speed and word choices all can affect the degree to which I appear present to others. Furthermore, the importance of the way I treat myself has become more apparent, too. Without adequate rest, exercise, nutrition, and Sabbath space, it is very difficult to "show-up" fully.

I look forward to the time when I have clinical knowledge and skills and will be able to fix patient's problems, but I know there are many I will not be able to fix. In those times, I hope to remember the lessons I learned here and remain attentive to the suffering of patients and be with them, truly present. Until then, I must continue with Presence 101 at the University of André House and try each moment of each day to be as present as I can be to all who enter our open doors.

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Volunteers

-by Lauren Rogers

At André House there are seven of us on Core Staff who run each of the many services that we provide for our guests. When arriving here just over a year and a half ago, I tried to wrap my head around trying to figure out how our small group would be able to help the hundreds of guest that walked through our doors. As our adventure continued, I realized that we could not do it all on our own. Without the thousands of volunteers who come to help at André House, we could not provide our guests with a warm meal, clothing, laundry, showers, blankets, or anything else.

Here at André House we have many volunteers assisting us serve our guests...some have been helping for a couple of weeks, others have been with us since we opened our doors in 1984. Some of our volunteers are retired and come down and spend a morning or two helping in the clothing closet, doing laundry, or sorting donations with Betty in the basement. Many of our volunteers work full time and come down on a particular day and spend the afternoon helping us in the kitchen cooking so we can provide between 400 and 800 hot meals to our guests six days a week. I know without my guys on Thursdays life would not happen by 5:30pm each week. Every Thursday I spend my afternoons in the kitchen with the greatest group of men. The guys (Lou, Tom, Richard, Bill, big John, little John, little little John) have been down to help in the kitchen on Thursdays for many years. I know now that these guys have the Mighty Bean Burrito Soupline down to a science and my job is simply to coordinate it.

While serving at André House I have learned that nothing ever goes according to our own plans, but by the grace of God it all works out better than expected. I can remember the morning of my first Soupline standing in the kitch-

en in tears after realizing that I did not know how to work the gas stove/oven. Ted, our wonderful "facilities manager", found me, then after calming me down and drying my tears, showed me how everything worked. He still comes into the kitchen every Thursday to check in on me. Later that first day, as our other wonderful volunteers began

to show up to help chop the veggies and fruit that Lou had washed, Big John walks into the kitchen. He introduced himself to me by saying, "Hi, my name is John. You are my thirteenth Core Member. You are going to be just fine." We, as a Thursday community, have been just fine ever since. Anytime I need help with the 200 questions from the 30 volunteers who are chopping the veggies and fruit, when I need an extra hand, and even when I just need a hug, the guys have my back. They laugh at my corny jokes; they hug me through my tears; they love me when I am in a bad mood; and,

they try sending me to the convent when I talk about boys. Thank you guys for all that you do for me.

All the volunteers here at André House are a part of our community, a part of our family. We enjoy the time they spend with us sharing their stories with our guests and us. Without the love and support they have given to André House over the many years we could not give our very best to our guests.

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Redefining Beauty

-by Matthew Hovde, CSC (Holy Cross Novice)

As part of his studies to become a Holy Cross priest, Matt spent a month serving at André House and living in Community.



As an Iconographer, I have been trained to look for God in the beautiful. The whole purpose of the art and theology of Iconography is to express and know God by drawing oneself deeper and deeper into the beauty of the Icon. It is easy to understand how God can be found in such wonderful pieces of art. It is easy to find Christ present in any number of things that attract us to them by their glorious appearance. During my four weeks at André House, I was challenged in my understanding of beauty.

I still maintain that we can find God in the beautiful, but I had this notion challenged as I was ministering to our guests. Our society certainly does not consider the homeless, jobless, or mentally ill as beautiful. It looks with shame on such people. For our society, there is not a glimpse of God in the homeless and struggling. The guests that come to André House are often marginalized for their appearance that too many consider dirty or disgusting. With the understanding that God can only be found in the beautiful, they do not even seek to find Our Lord in the place He promised to remain with us: the Poor.

The Congregation of Holy Cross has the motto "Ave Crux Spes Unica," which translates to "Hail the Cross, Our Only Hope." What an interesting motto. It does not say, "Hail Jesus," or "Hail the One on the Cross." It affirms for us that the Cross itself offers us a transformative and redemptive hope. We cannot shirk the Cross, or run from the Cross, or hope to find Christ apart from the Cross. The difficulties, hardships, and misunderstandings of our lives can and do draw us ever closer to Jesus Christ.

I believe an understanding of this is needed to understand André House. By our world's standards, there is no reason for any of us, staff, volunteers, or religious of Holy Cross to ever find our Lord here. But we do! Daily we are confronted with the face of Jesus Christ in the poor and afflicted who come to us. It is they who are for us the face of God. This was a real challenge for an Iconographer to accept. I have been trained to spend hours doing slow and tedious work to ensure an Icon comes out perfect. The face of Christ I saw at André House was not a handsome, glorious face of beauty. It was a beaten down, dirt covered, frustrated, disappointed face. It was a human face. It is that face of our guests that for us shines fully with the life of Jesus Christ.

Perhaps then, it was not my idea of God being found in the beautiful that needed to be challenged. It was rather the idea of what actual beauty is. Although delicate paint, shining gold, and hours of work to ensure perfection are beautiful, it is not the only beautiful thing. The smiling faces of our guests were beautiful, despite how care-worn they were. The laughs shared with our guests coming in just to have someone to talk to were beautiful, regardless of any disease they may suffer. The man coming into our parking lot to find a safe place to sit down and pray to God was beautiful, no matter when his last shower was. True beauty shines through mere appearances. No amount of dust, dirt, or even despair can wipe away the beauty that each of our guests have in them, by virtue of who they are, a child of God.

I am extremely grateful for my time at André House. As I had been warned by my brothers in the Congregation of Holy Cross, it was the hardest working, most challenging month of my life with Holy Cross. I have never been so tired going home. I also have never been so happy. I have never laughed so hard, or looked so forward to waking up extra early to start the day. For even though I was daily encountering the Cross, I was given the blessing to daily see the Hope it offers. Never have I seen the face of God covered with soot or dirt, worry or anxiety, looking so joyful and holy; looking so beautiful.

Connections

-by Elizabeth Diedrich

Who is the first person you share exciting news with?
 What friend do you consult when you need advice?
 When having a bad day, who makes you laugh?

We build our lives around our relationships with friends and family. Together we celebrate the joyful moments, offer advice, help each other through the challenging moments, and sit together through the ordinary. Although never perfect or easy, these relationships bless us beyond understanding. The relationships we have give our lives meaning, structure, love and purpose.

Yet, for various reasons, many of our guests at André House do not have these relationships. This could be due to the incarceration of a parent, spousal abuse, mental illness of a sibling, gang involvement of friends, the premature death of parents, personal drug use, or it may just be disagreements and the unwillingness to forgive.

So often when we think of homelessness we think of people who lack shelter, food, and clothing. These represent true struggles; yet, often the real struggle is lack of relationships.

The lack of relationships contributes to the problems of homelessness in two ways. First, these problems directly lead to people losing housing. For example, a guest may be kicked out of a house or may leave fearing for his or her own safety.

Second, more abstractly, people do not succeed without concrete, supportive relationships. Without family and friends, people lack support, love, and encouragement. These are replaced with isolation, loneliness, and fear. Spending so much time alone leads to a breakdown of basic communication skills, a lack of knowledge of current events, and an inability to cope with challenges. These problems make a person less employable. These problems can lead to a sense of abandonment, a cycle of depression and a slow digression into hopelessness. Without hope, change does not happen.

In this way the lack of relationships perpetuates the problems of homelessness.

The relationships we have with friends and family provide support, relief, encouragement, and humor. It is a blessing to come home at the end of a difficult day and sit down to share a meal with people you love and who love you.

At André House we try to create a community where people feel welcomed and loved. We try to learn names and remember stories. Learning names is hard, and I make many mistakes. I called 'Wayne' by the name 'Todd' for a month before he corrected me. I remember one day I said hello to William, and he was startled and shocked that I would remember his name. I have known Billy for three years and have seen him on and off the wagon twice as many times.

André House is meant to be a place of hope, a place where people become empowered. Giving someone a meal is easy; giving someone hope is more challenging. Yet, in our simple ways we stumble along trying to be people of hope creating a place of hope.

We need low incoming housing options. We need soup kitchens. We need places that offer free clothing and showers. But this is only the beginning. To reverse the problems that those experiencing homelessness face, we need not only houses, but also homes. We need not only meals, but also family suppers. We need warm clothing and blankets, but also the warmth that comes from friendly faces and loving hugs.

So take a moment, close your eyes...

Imagine if you were instantly homeless - no house, no job, no car, no money. What is the first thing you would do? Who would you call? How long is your list of family, friends, neighbors, faith community, and coworkers that you could call upon for help?

Now, count your blessings.



I'm sorry! You Can't Take Your Cup Out!

-by Annie McAlevey



During dinner at André House, we have three gates: front, middle and back. At front gate, a staff person hands out numbered tickets. At middle gate, the tickets are collected in *approximate* order. At back gate, we sit at the back door, wish everyone a goodnight and provide a friendly reminder to recycle their plastic cup—under no circumstance may the cups leave the dining room!

Personally, back gate is my favorite. As I take my seat at the top of the steps under the exit sign, I watch as the first couple of guests wander into the main dining room with their trays. In that moment, I know that another beautiful miracle has taken place at André House. A group of 30 plus volunteers, under the leadership of a Soupline coordinator, has successfully prepped, cooked, and served dinner for hundreds of people. Yes, serving dinner is a wonderful thing, but truly the most amazing part about back gate is the guests themselves. Upon exiting the building, the majority of guests greet me with an overwhelming amount of gratitude and love.

I have had a variety of moments at back gate from guests asking me to pray for them, some thanking me for the only meal they have had all day, and some even screaming in my face about the amount of carrots in the goulash. It is no secret that there is a great deal of negativity and violence outside the walls of André House, but I pray that the kindness that I see will flow onto the street.



Director's Letter by Fr. Eric Schimmel, CSC

(Continued from page 1)

We decided to suspend the program until September. That is a time of year when school and other programs begin. Perhaps in that climate we will have better luck receiving the information we need to make sure everyone stays safe.

On a fun note, at the end of January Br. Richard and I moved into a **new house**. For several years the Holy Cross community had rented a house. In the middle of December a house five doors down from us on the same street went up for sale at a very cheap price – less than ¼ of what it sold for less than a decade ago. The housing market obviously has not recovered in Phoenix. Purchasing the house gives us a stable place to call home and will save us money in the long run. Besides, it also gave Br. Richard and I – as well as the rest of the staff – an opportunity to hone our painting and house warming skills.

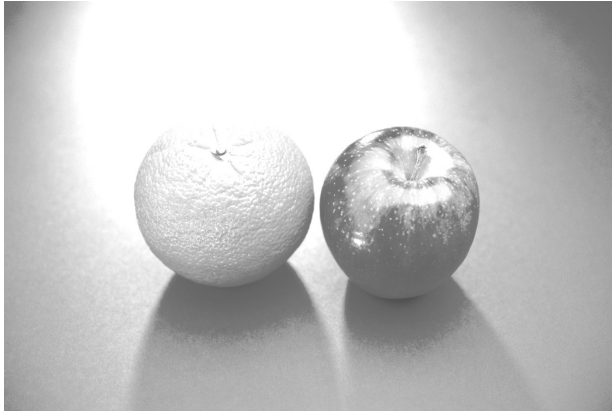
The motto Fr. Basil Moreau, CSC, founder of the Congregation of Holy Cross, gave to his community is “Ave Crux, Spes Unica” which means “Hail the Cross, our Only Hope.” In this Lent as we move towards Easter, I pray that all of us who are part of the André House family may have the grace to help people see the hope that comes from the cross – the cross that leads to resurrection.

God bless,
Fr. Eric



Apples & Oranges—and Who Decides

-by Fr. Eric Schimmel, CSC



As I write this, the controversy around President Obama's new national policy on birth control coverage still swirls. Several things strike me about this debate, and the reactions people have to it. From the start I want to say that this article will NOT be about contraception. In fact, I believe that getting bogged down in a discussion of contraception misses something fundamental.

The heart of the matter, for me, is who or what qualifies as "church," and who defines that. One thing that troubles me in the discussions has been the way the controversy has been defined in the media and by the current administration. As I understood the issue, the Catholic bishops objected to the federal mandate forcing religiously affiliated institutions, with the exception of churches or houses of worship, to provide coverage for birth control for all of its employees. Many people of different faiths joined in the dissent, claiming that it would infringe upon the separation of church and state.

In response to the outcry, the White House offered a compromise that would shift the payment of the coverage from religious employers to the health insurance companies. Since then, the majority of the articles that I have seen have focused on the morality of contraception, who should have the authority to speak for Catholics when statistics show an overwhelming majority of sexually active Catholic women admit to having used birth control, and focusing on the absolute refusal of one group – the bishops – to recognize an attempted compromise.

Personally, I have been shocked by the fact that no one seems to notice that the proposed solution to a question of constitutionality comes solely from finances. In other words, the White House has proposed a compromise solution to a

question about the 1st Amendment (i.e. how far can the government go in forcing religious entities to do something against their teachings). However, the supposed compromise does not directly address anything constitutional, but changes who directly pays for the service deemed immoral (i.e. does the religious entity pay or does the health insurance company used by said religious entity pay - leaving aside the fact that the religious entity purchases the insurance). Are we buying the argument that constitutionality depends on who pays? I find the issue of solving a question about religious liberty with an appeal to who directly pays a confusion of apples (constitutionality) and oranges (money).

Most troubling has been what I see to be the real heart of the matter. The health care mandate includes exemptions for churches or houses of worship, but these exemptions do not necessarily extend to religiously affiliated institutions.

But who gets to define what qualifies as church and what constitutes church activity? From what I have read, the exemption for churches applies to institutions **whose primary purpose is the inculcation of religious values and who primarily hire and serve people of the same religious faith**. This strikes me as a very narrow definition and understanding of church.

The Book of James 1:22 clearly states that we should "Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves." The wording I have heard about what kind of institutions receive an exemption does not seem, to me, to allow a church to follow the Scriptural mandate of loving neighbor – especially as defined by Jesus who reached out to the outsiders.

Reflecting on the policy as I have seen it reported, I wonder whether a place like André House - a Catholic organization which remains open to having non-Catholics on Core or other staff positions, which invites people of all faiths to help in our mission of serving (especially on the Soup-line), and which does not impose a religious litmus test on those served – would a place like André House qualify as a church or house of worship under the terms of the health care regulation? From what I have read, it remains doubtful. Yet as the Director of André House, a ministry of the priests and brothers of Holy Cross, I fully believe that what we do in serving our guests comes from our Catholic faith and a desire to put that faith into practice. That is why we have the quote from Matthew 25 at

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Apples & Oranges—and Who Decides

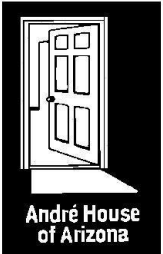
-by Fr. Eric Schimmel, CSC

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the top of our webpage.

In some ways I find it ironic that the Catholic Church, so often criticized for being exclusive in many ways, now finds itself at the center of a controversy because some of its institutions are inclusive (i.e. inviting others to join them in mission not only as volunteers, but by hiring them; serving people regardless of faith

without attempting to convert everyone to the Catholic faith).

No matter where one stands on the issue of contraception, I feel that we should all shudder when the state defines what constitutes church activity in such narrow and exclusive ways. A church should feel free to share God's gifts with all people and invite all people to participate in the sharing. 



You are invited to ...

André House

Volunteer Appreciation Mass and Potluck

Date: Sunday April 22, 2012

Time: 10:00am Mass, potluck brunch to follow

Please join us as a “thank you” for all you do in support of our guests and our ministry. Without your support and prayers our ministry would not be possible.

This Volunteer Appreciation will be extra special as we wish to recognize volunteers who have been with André House almost since the beginning.

We hope you can join us for this celebration!

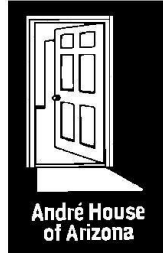
Hospitality Center

213 S. 11th Ave

Phoenix, AZ 85007

(Northeast corner of 11th Ave and Jackson)

“So let’s not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don’t give up.” Galatians 6:9



Easter Activities

Please join us for the following celebrations throughout the Lenten Season.

Holy Thursday

We will offer to wash the feet of our guests during Soupline.

After Soupline, join us as we will have dinner at our Transitional Houses (1203 W Polk). At 8:30pm there will be the Mass of the Lord's Supper, including washing of the feet.



Good Friday

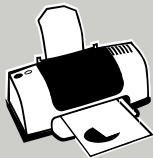
We will have our traditional Stations of the Cross ceremony. Please meet at the Capitol parking lot at 5:00pm.

[Please verify times beforehand by checking our website Events Calendar at www.andrehouse.org & clicking on Get Involved.]

Easter Sunday

11:00am Mass at Transitional Houses (1203 W Polk)

1:00pm Potluck - bring a dish to share



OLD INK CARTRIDGES?



Please donate your old printer ink cartridges to André House. See below for donation address & times.

*For a complete list of needed items, click on the Donate link on our website: www.andrehouse.org.
THANK YOU!*

DONATION ADDRESS & TIMES:

André House Hospitality Center
213 S 11th Ave
Phoenix AZ 85007
(Northeast corner of 11th Ave & Jackson)

Mon - Thu 10:00am to Noon & 1:00pm - 4:00pm
Fri CLOSED
Sat & Sun 1:00pm - 4:00pm

Mailing List



Do you want to be removed from the mailing list? (STOP!)



Does your name or address need to be corrected?



Are you reading a friend's copy of The Open Door & want to be added to our mailing list?



If any of these are true, then please use the enclosed envelope and **send the mailing label on this newsletter** with either the changes that need to be made or the word "REMOVE" on it. The list will be updated before our next mailing.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please contact Teresa Hipp:

Email: coordinator@andrehouse.org

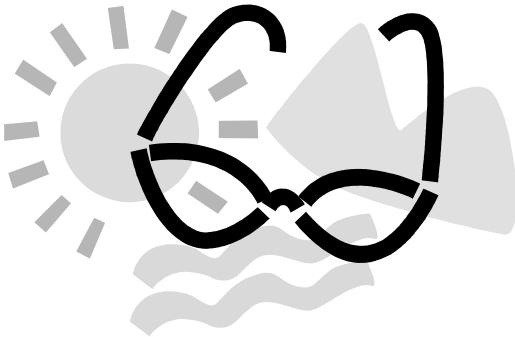
Phone: 602-255-0580 x302.

If you leave the information in a voicemail, please leave a phone number in case there are questions. Thank you!

André House's mailing list is not sold or given to any other organization



Do you need Community Service Hours?



As the snowbirds head home, the school groups break for the summer and people head off to vacation, André House typically needs volunteers during **June, July & August**.

Beat the rush to get your service hours in for next Fall by helping this Summer!

Email or call to schedule your time or if you have questions...

Teresa Hipp, Volunteer Coordinator

Email: coordinator@andrehouse.org

Phone: 602-255-0580 ext 302

(no drop-in's, please)





André House

PO Box 2014
Phoenix, AZ 85001
Phone: 602-252-9023 or 602-255-0580
www.andrehouse.org

The Open Door



**Join us every
First Friday for
Mass and Potluck at
1203 W Polk
6:30pm**



Non-Profit Org
Us Postage
Paid
Phoenix, AZ
Permit No. 2751



André House Needs: Spring Focus Items!

- Sunglasses
- Shorts & summer clothes
- Men's jeans & black pants (sizes 30-38)
- Belts
- Backpacks
- Men's & women's underwear (larger sizes)
- Men's white tube socks
- Men's tennis shoes (sizes 9-12)
- Deodorant
- Cough drops, antacids, ibuprofen, vitamins, etc
- Blankets

