



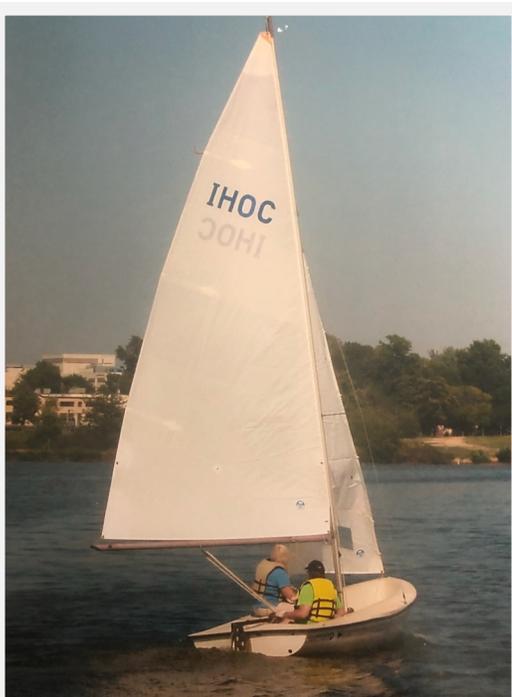
IHOC Monthly News

Volume VI, Issue VII



I am sure that many of you are wondering when IHOC will be able to resume our Hospitality Network Program. Well, you are not alone. The IHOC Board is wrestling with the same question. At this point we are facing a lot of unknowns related to the Covid pandemic as well as the loss of the Dambly House which served both as a Transitional house and as home base for Network participants, a classroom, and meeting space as well as a back up shower and sick room facility. Here are some of the major issues we will need to resolve before we can recruit men for the Network program:

1. Many of our participating congregations are still not open for in person worship and congregational activities. Until these congregations are comfortable and fully open for their own members, they will not be able to consider hosting a group of homeless strangers.
2. Even when congregations are ready to consider hosting, some may not be able to do so unless congregational volunteers, those who volunteered in the past and, in particular, new volunteers are recruited. So, when these congregations are ready to consider hosting IHOC will need to be ready to make the kind of presentation and appeal we made when we first recruited the congregation and their volunteers.
3. IHOC needs to secure additional donated or rental space that can be used as a home base for the men in the Network. This space could be part of another house which we could use for this purpose as well as for additional transitional housing or could be space provided in a congregational facility. The IHOC Property Committee is actively searching for another location but so far have not been able to locate an appropriate space.



4. Some of the men participating in the Hospitality Network were men who were unable to work and were receiving Social Security benefits, including retirement income, but who were still in need of housing. Many attended programs sponsored by a variety of social service agencies during the day. These agencies are now operating remotely and have not indicated when they expect to open full time. Hopefully, they will reopen soon. If they do not, the challenge will be to find or create meaningful substitutes.

So, these are some the problems and issues facing IHOC. Because I am a sailor, I like to think of them as head winds that could hold us back or even sink the IHOC ship. However, as a sailor I also know that it is when you have the courage to sail into the wind you can, with careful planning, make the most headway. That is what happened when IHOC's intrepid Mall Walk Committee decided to go ahead with the Walk under what looked like an impossible situation and pulled off the most successful fund raiser in IHOC history. That is what I am proposing we attempt for the Hospitality Network. **I BELIEVE THAT IHOC WILL MAKE HEADWAY DESPITE THE CHALLENGES IF YOU ARE ON BOARD.** So please review our list of challenges and let us know how you can help.



Hello all,
Tom Martin here. Rhoda and I put this newsletter together each month and we thought it would be a good idea for each board member and non board members who are an integral part of IHOC (like Rhoda) tell how we became a part of the IHOC family.

My journey started probably 15 to 20 years ago while I was attending St Andrew's United Methodist Church. They have a wonderful mission's program of which IHOC plays a major part. I was recruited to be a night host and sleep over with the guys. I was bitten from the start, I really enjoyed dinner and hanging out with the guys.

I think we played some hoops in the gym and watched some NCAA March Madness on the television. At the end of the day, they weren't all that different than me. I had a much easier childhood than them and as a result our lives took

different directions, but we all liked the same things. (including the wonderful meals that were made by the SAUMC folks...that church can cook!!)

After a few years of being an overnight host and going to Mall Walks and slowly becoming more involved with IHOC and getting to know the folks that ran the organization I was the coordinator at SAUMC. And loved loved loved the 2 weeks the men stayed with us. (I have to admit I also loved loved loved it when my two weeks were over. LOL)

It's very rewarding to be a coordinator for a house of worship in this program, but it's incredibly stressful and requires a lot of long hours and hard work. So please be sure to thank and offer to help the coordinator at your church or synagoue.

After a few years of being coordinator and just hanging out with the guys on some Sunday's watching football or catching dinner with them, I wanted to do more.

Then, one dark and stormy night, my phone rang.....

FROM THE EDITORIAL BOARD OF THE IHOC NEWSLETTER:

We are stopping Tom's gripping tale there. We're not gonna let an opportunity to ask you to assist with the next Newsletter that easily.

Don't you want to be like Tom (of course you do, who doesn't?).

Well if so, please submit your own ***"how I got hooked by IHOC"*** story.

If we receive 5 of them, Tom's story will be completed in the next issue.

If you print your story in the memo portion of a check or the back of a crisp Benjamin, we'll be sure it's headline news.

Seriously though, we would love to hear from you and how you became involved with IHOC, what it has meant to you (and your family), and ideas or improvement's you would recommend, etc.

Just send an email to info@ihocsj.org. It can be anonymous if you want.

