

## Homeless

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The downturn in the economy is also causing more families to become homeless. Ban explained that it is not just the loss of a job, but often a combination of factors that lead families to shelters. For some families, the loss of a wage-earner coupled with a lack of medical insurance and high medical bills is enough to put them on the streets.

As families begin to struggle, they turn to the county's food system for help, Ban said.

"But eventually they are less and less able to continue to pay housing costs," she said.

Some families call Family Shelter House, a ShelterCare program, to help them get back on their feet. At the shelter's location on Highway 99, homeless families can receive rent-free apartments and support services for up to two months. Ban said the extra time often allows families to save money for the first month's rent on an apartment.

Parents who choose to stay for two months are taught how to budget money, pay their bills and find

jobs. Of the families who receive counseling, Ban said 78 percent leave the shelter to move into permanent housing.

ShelterCare is part of a tight community of service providers called the "Human Services Network" that meets monthly. By coordinating their efforts and streamlining policies, the community groups are able to provide families with long-term support, Ban said.

"They get them on a road where they will not go back to being homeless again," she said.

Ban said that in the 1999 to 2000 fiscal year, 543 families asked to be placed on ShelterCare's waiting list for free housing. In the following year, 612 families called. She said she expects the number of displaced families to rise.

"We have seen a rise just in the first four months of the fiscal year," she said.

At the Family Shelter House, an increased demand for housing means a longer waiting list for homeless families. Homeless families must wait at least three weeks before they can stay, said operations manager Yolanda Lockamy.

Dana Turell, the communications

director of Food for Lane County, said that the community has been giving generously to their nonprofit organization this fall. Food for Lane County is an umbrella organization that provides nonperishable food to ShelterCare and about 100 other local groups. Turell said its monetary donations have doubled compared to this same time last year.

But Food for Lane County faces a continual problem: The growing demand for food has increased more than donations that Food for Lane County is receiving, Turell said. She said she expects this winter to be particularly tough because of job layoffs and rising utility costs.

Food for Lane County's shelves illustrate this distress. While the organization aims to keep a six-week supply of food in stock, only two weeks' worth of provisions remain this season.

"We have already had to tighten our belts," she said.

A small shelf stock at Food for Lane County means less food for the area organizations that distribute it. The 22 emergency food box agencies that rely on Food for Lane County have chosen to enforce stricter rules about distribution of

### Efforts by students

University dining halls ameliorate hunger by donating daily leftovers to Food for Lane County. Additionally, at Saturday's Civil War game, it was announced that in a recent canned food competition, students in the University's residence halls donated enough extra meal points to purchase 7,520 pounds of beans, rice and pasta for Food for Lane County.

### Suggestions for students

Staff and students can leave plastic bags containing canned food next to their mail boxes on Dec. 8. In this "Cans for Carriers who Care" program, postal workers will donate their collections to Food for Lane County.

Monetary donations, warm clothing and

blankets as well as packaged non-perishable food can also be delivered to any of the following Lane ShelterCare locations during the holidays:

**ShelterCare Administrative Offices**, 1790 W. 11th Ave., Suite 290, 686-1262.

**Garden Place**, 3692 Hickory Ave., 784-7800.

**Hawthorn Program**, 2988 Oak St., 343-4070.

**River Bend Supportive Community**, 740 Van Buren St., 302-9195.

**Safe Haven**, 1545 S. Brooklyn Ave., 741-7726.

**Uhlhorn Program**, 689 W. 13th Ave., 345-4244.

**Brethren Housing**, 1062 Main St., Springfield, 726-8125.

Sources: Katie Bryant, assistant director of residence life, U.S. Postal Service and Maureen Morrison, counselor advocate

the food, and they limit families to one food box per month, she said.

The empty shelves affect Family Shelter House as well. The families still receive a weekly box of rations, but Ban said the meals are smaller and less nutritious.

These nonprofit organizations are

counting on more donations this winter to help support homeless and needy people, Turell said.

"We might not have enough food to feed everybody," she said.

Emerald features reporter Anne Le Chevallier can be reached at [annelechevallier@dailyemerald.com](mailto:annelechevallier@dailyemerald.com).

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