

November 2015



# Journeys

A Newsletter of Travelers Aid International

## OUR NEWS

### **Message from the President**

It's hard to believe another year has flown by and we are headed into the Holiday Season. I know this is a busy time of year for our member agencies. For those who have airport/train/bus terminal operations, there will be heavy passenger traffic this holiday season, and the aftermath of the tragic bombings in Paris will no doubt compound the already harried travelers. For our agencies that work with the homeless and people in crisis, the holidays are always a tough time as everyone wants some sense of "Home for the Holidays." Through it all, Travelers Aid and its member agencies will be *A Helping Hand Along the Way* for so many people. And for that, we offer our most sincere THANKS for GIVING all that you give. Happy Holidays! Dave

### **Greyhound Partnership Changes Coming**

In the coming days, we will be announcing changes to the partnership between Greyhound and Travelers Aid member Agencies. We hope that some of these changes will make it much easier to purchase tickets and do away with paper vouchers.

### **Save the Date - 2016 Annual Conference in Las Vegas on June 13-15**

The 2016 Travelers Aid Annual Conference will be held June 13-15 at the New York, New York Hotel & Resort in Las Vegas. We have reserved a great hotel group rate of \$58 per night Sunday through Wednesday (yes, you read that right) so be on the look-out for more information in the coming weeks!

### **Work on the Web Progressing**

We are making progress on the redesign of our website. This week we received the second draft of the home page design and will soon be setting the conversion timetable.

## Almost Ready to Go to Press

The Travelers Aid International Membership Directory is nearly complete and will soon be heading to the printer. One last step, please review and approve the proof of your agency's profile. This profile will be in your inbox within the next several days.

## YOUR NEWS

### Sharing: Seeking Ideas to Improve Personal Security

Mollie Hester, executive director of Travelers Aid of Greater Birmingham, has posed a question seeking suggestions from other agencies.

Mollie writes: As a small, all-female staff we've always been very aware of our personal safety while working with transients, walk-ins and other clients who are unknown to us. Over the years we've had a few incidents with clients who "crossed the line" in expressing their displeasure, frustration, etc... But all in all those were really few and far between. I always credited it to the skill sets of staff in being able to diffuse those situations.

Recently though we seem to have a rash of especially volatile clients. We've had to summon the police 3 times in a 2 week span. Some may be due to our new location, but we've been here over 18 months and these incidents have all been fairly recent.

I'm wondering what policies/precautions other TA agencies have in place to ensure the safety/protection of their staff. Maybe there are some things we could be doing that we are not already. Please write to [Mollie](#).

### Tax Preparation Up in St. Petersburg

The year-round tax VITA tax preparation program at Daystar Life Center has experienced explosive growth. Through October, the number of returns prepared in 2015 is more than double the number processed in 2014. This brief [video](#) explains more about the program, offered as a free service to low-to-middle income tax payers.

### Commission on Economic Opportunity Sways Crowd to Earn \$20,000

The Commission on Economic Opportunity's Food for Kids Weekends Backpack Program recently received a \$20,000 gift from the Luzerne Foundation and its Millennium Circle. Five non-profits in the Wilkes-Barre area made pitches to the 175 members of the Millennium Circle at the group's recent annual luncheon. After hearing the presentations, the members voted on which non-profits would receive their 2015 funding. The Backpack Program provides food for children over the weekend when school meals are not available. [View CEO's presentation..](#)

### New Youth Training Program Begins in Green Bay

Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin in Green Bay this fall launched a new youth program, Pathways to Employment. It is a Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act funded program that works with youth, 14-24, to set and attain both educational and

employment goals.

### **Tiny Houses Not the Answer, Davis Says**

Floyd Davis, president and CEO of Community Link in Charlotte, was quoted in the Sept. 23 edition of *The Charlotte Observer*. The newspaper did a story on the "tiny house" movement while raising the question if the smaller dwellings could be an answer to the shortage of affordable housing. Davis noted these accessory dwellings probably won't help address the city's most urgent need for affordable housing, either. The greatest need is among families, and one-bedroom units most often would not be adequate. And the suggested rental price would make them out of reach for many people, Davis said. [Read more.](#)

### **The Governor is Wrong, Ring Tells *The Globe***

In a Letter to the Editor in *The Boston Globe*, Richard E. Ring, president of FamilyAid Boston, criticized a proposal by Massachusetts Gov. Charlie Baker to cut homeless families emergency shelter and essential social services. "Without shelter as a safety net while they work to obtain housing, more than 5,000 displaced men, women, and children would be placed at risk. Such a move, when the state's Department of Children and Families is overwhelmed with its current caseload, clearly is an ill-conceived plan that the Legislature should reject," Ring wrote. [Read more.](#)

### **Ring: Dorchester's Boom Hurting the Homeless**

In an Aug. 27 story in *The Dorchester Reporter* concerning the housing boom in that Boston neighborhood, Richard Ring, executive director of Family Aid Boston, noted that changes to the area strikes most heavily at those already teetering on the edge. Homeless families with either federal Section 8 housing vouchers or Massachusetts Rental Vouchers are no longer able to fully leverage their vouchers toward market rate apartments, falling short by hundreds of dollars. [Read more.](#)

## **VOLUNTEERS**

### **Chicago**

More than 100 volunteers and guests attended the Oct. 21 Travelers Aid of Chicago annual appreciation luncheon in Elk Grove. The program recognized 3 volunteers for extensive service: Marian Elstad, 30 years; Mary York, 23 years; and Ruth Dearborn, 20 years. Ralph Johnson was inducted in the Travelers Aid Hall of Fame for providing more than 20 years of service. An appreciation gift of a Travelers Aid mug and thermos tumbler was provided to each volunteer.

On Nov. 15, the *Chicago Reader* profiled Travelers Aid volunteer Al Borcover, the former travel editor at the *Chicago Tribune*. [Read Al's profile](#)

### **Newark**

The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey will host a holiday brunch on Dec. 10 for The Travelers Aid at Newark Liberty Airport volunteers at a local hotel in appreciation for the work of the 50 volunteers in 2015.

### **New York**

The Travelers Aid at JFK Airport will have a "field trip" to mark its holiday appreciation event for its volunteers. On Dec. 1, two charter buses will transport the volunteers from the airport in Queens to Grand Central Station in mid-Manhattan. The volunteers suggested the

outing as a way to experience the bus and route that they send countless passengers on each day. Each volunteer will receive a gift card, courtesy of The Port Authority of New York and New Jersey, so they can lunch at the train station. Grand Central will have its holiday fair set up and holiday decorations will be up as well.

## **Milwaukee**

Two Travelers Aid volunteers at Milwaukee's General Mitchell International Airport recently came to the aid of "The Fonz" aka Henry Winkler who needed assistance in printing a boarding pass. Winkler had been in Milwaukee to deliver a keynote speech on the importance of understanding children who have learning challenges.

## **Oklahoma City**

On Nov. 5, Upward Transitions/ Travelers Aid of Oklahoma City hosted its annual Volunteer Recognition Luncheon for the 65 volunteers at Will Rogers World Airport. Volunteers were recognized for their years of service and included milestones from Marianna Vance for 10 years of service, Martha Lane with 15 years of service, Carroll Johnson with 20 years of service and Albert Janco celebrating 25 years of service.

## **Washington**

Nearly 300 Travelers Aid volunteers at Washington Dulles International Airport gathered at a nearby hotel on Nov. 13 to mark the upcoming holiday season with a luncheon hosted by the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

On Dec. 4, the Travelers Aid volunteers at Washington Reagan National Airport will gather in a Alexandria, Va., hotel to celebrate another year of service and mark the holiday season. The Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority will host the luncheon.

The 25 Travelers Aid volunteers at Washington Union Station on Dec. 16 will gather at a downtown restaurant to celebrate the holiday season.

---

## **MILESTONES**

### *New Hires, Promotions and Retirements*

**Chicago** - *Emily Thompson* was recently hired as the new Travelers Aid of Chicago volunteer coordinator. She had been a volunteer for the last five years at O'Hare Terminal 2 information desk.

**DFW** - *Tammy Hingtgen*, director of operations, for Travelers Aid at DFW Airport, resigned to go to Michigan to help her aging mother. *Elena Troupe* has been hired to replace her as lost and found manager. *Andrea Haley* has also been hired as a lost and found recovery specialist.

**Ontario** - *Richard Gerety*, president of the board of Travelers Aid of the Inland Empire, was honored on Nov. 5 by the Ontario-Montclair YMCA Veteran's Prayer Breakfast with its Exemplary Community Service Award. Travelers Aid Executive Director *Therese Andrews* nominated Gerety for the award.

**Washington, D.C.** - In August, *Dave Johnson* was promoted to Assistant Manager of the Travelers Aid program at Washington Reagan National Airport. He joined Travelers Aid in March 2014.

Leanne Omland, Travelers Aid program manager at Reagan Airport, has joined the airport's Family Assistance Support Team. It is a group of airport employees and contractors who will be meeting monthly to prepare for a full-scale disaster drill next April. Leanne's involvement provides an excellent opportunity for Travelers Aid to be fully aware of all emergency preparedness plans and to offer significant input. Travelers Aid also will assemble a small group of volunteers who live close to the airport to serve on-call in the event of a disaster.

## FUNDRAISING

### *Notes and Future Events*

#### **#GivingTuesday**

A number of our Travelers Aid members are participating in a national day of charitable giving. After Thanksgiving, after Black Friday, after Cyber Monday comes #GivingTuesday, a global day dedicated to giving back. On Dec. 1, charities, families, businesses, community centers, and students around the world will come together for one common purpose: to celebrate generosity and to give. It's a simple idea. Just find a way for your family, your community, your company and/or your organization to come together to give something more. Then tell everyone you can about how you are giving. Join us and be a part of a global celebration of a new tradition of generosity.

#### **Atlanta Dinner Garners \$200,000**

The 2015 Heroes for HOPE Award Dinner on Oct. 29 raised \$200,000 for HOPE Atlanta. The event honored Noel Khalil and Columbia Residential for their exemplary efforts to advance the mission of HOPE Atlanta. In addition, Atlanta Mayor Kasim Reed spoke on the community's efforts to end homelessness among veterans.

#### **People TV Spotlights HOPE Atlanta**

HOPE Atlanta and its Executive Director, Ed Powers, participated in the GA Gives Day 'Fund-A-Thon' on Nov. 12 on People TV. Powers was interviewed and explained HOPE Atlanta's programs.

#### **Packers Event Sets New Record for Family Services**

The 27th Green and Gold Gala in Green Bay raised \$274,810 for the youth programs at Family Services of Northeast Wisconsin. The Green Bay Packers sponsored the annual fundraiser and more than 41 Packers Hall of Fame alumni attended the Sept. 19 event.

#### **Future Fundraising Events**

**Nov. 20** - Phoenix's St. Vincent De Paul Society will host Restoring Hope Breakfast at Arizona Biltmore. [Learn more.](#)

**Nov. 22** - HOPE Atlanta hosts the 2nd annual Thanksgiving Burrito Armageddon Triathlon. [Learn more.](#)

**Dec. 4.** - Daytona Beach's Halifax Urban Ministries is sponsoring the 8th Annual Empty Bowls &

Silent Auction featuring art and gifts. at The Center for Civic Engagement. [Learn more.](#)

**Dec. 6** - Heartland Alliance's Annual Holiday Brunch at the Four Season Hotel. [Learn More.](#)

**Dec. 6** - St. Petersburg's Daystar Life Center Holiday Party at Saint Mary Our Lady of Grace Catholic Church Parish Hall.

**Dec. 10** - Family Aid Boston's Home for the Holidays reception at the Parkman House. [Learn more.](#)

**Dec. 14** - Nashville Rescue Mission presents The Forgotten Carols: A Musical at Collins Theater on the Lipscomb University campus. [Learn more.](#)

---

## TAI Headquarters Staff

**Dave Asselin**, President/CEO

[dave@travelersaid.org](mailto:dave@travelersaid.org)

202-546-1127 ext. 101

**Andrea Itkin**, Senior Director, Transportation Programs

[andrea@travelersaid.org](mailto:andrea@travelersaid.org)

202-546-1127 ext. 103

**David North**, Director of Social Services Programs

[dnorth@travelersaid.org](mailto:dnorth@travelersaid.org)

202-546-1127 ext. 104

**Thomas J. Smith**, Manager of Communications & Development

[tom@travelersaid.org](mailto:tom@travelersaid.org)

202-546-1127 ext. 102

---

*STAY CONNECTED*

