

# Uncovering Hidden Homelessness

~ raising awareness and promoting change

 **SPRING ISSUE - MARCH 2023**



## Lived Experience Voice

# 1

“I feel conflicted when someone is struggling and asks if they can stay in my home temporarily. With me renting, I have limited resources and it is not enough to help. It is a risk to my housing. It hurts, to see someone struggling and not be able to help because it could cause you to lose your housing. If you do not have secure housing, you cannot focus on anything else. You cannot focus on education, work – you only focus on survival. You are not thinking about anything else, and it can take weeks, months, years, to get stable. That’s why people stay in poverty. The more I help, the more I risk becoming homeless again. I have to offer my limited resources, and it affects my family. It is painful, it’s hurtful. If I allow someone to come in, I am putting myself close to becoming doubled up again.”

*~formerly doubled up single mother of two, who is stably housed, working, and in school*

## Define It...

# 3



### What is Section 42 Housing?

Established as part of the Tax Reform Act of 1986, Section 42 properties set aside a certain number of units in an apartment community for those earning less than 50 percent of the area’s median income. Tenants must fall beneath certain income restrictions for those units, and the rent is lower than market rate rent. Section 42 is not the same as subsidized or public housing, where the resident’s rent is based on 30% of their income and the amount of rent is adjusted when household income changes. The vast majority of new affordable housing development within the Madison and Dane County community is Section 42 housing, which at times is also called workforce housing.

# 2

## Getting to Know You:

**Marilyn Feil**



**Tell us about your position and the upcoming expansion of the program**

I am a Housing Program Leader with Joining Forces for Families (JFF). This was a new position when I started in this role in September 2021. I work in three JFF areas: Badger Road; Deer Valley Road/Southeast area; Leopold School area. I partner with the JFF social workers in those areas. They refer families and individuals to me who need housing help – assistance in looking for housing or help in keeping their current housing.

In the news 

# 4

*(Click on a link below to be transported to the article)*

[Student homelessness grows in Madison](#)

[Seeking a roof over their heads](#)

# 5

## What’s On Deck...

### Understanding Mobility and Homelessness

**Mondays April 10 - May15  
4:30 - 7:00 PM**

**Location: Pinney Branch Library, 516 Cottage Grove Rd**

*click above for information on how to register*

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Introducing **Marilyn Feil** (Continued from page 1)

I also work on projects such as developing resources, participating on committees, etc. Many of the people I help with housing search are doubled-up homeless families and individuals in those areas.

Another Housing Program Leader will be hired this year and they will work in two or three other JFF areas. I am hoping we will collaborate and work together on projects.

**What does a typical day look like?**

I split my time between the offices – Mondays at Leopold, Tuesdays and Thursdays at Deer Valley, Wednesday at Badger, and Friday I work from home. It is usually a day of connecting with people I am assisting and connecting with landlords. Most every day I have some appointments set up to meet with or talk on the phone with people I am assisting. I will sometimes stop in to see a landlord I need to reach. I consult with the JFF workers I team with. Often there is a Zoom meeting. I have been fortunate to be able to work with an intern this year, Cynthia, who is a big help.

**What is the best part of your job? The hardest part of your job?**

The best part of the job is the people – the people I assist, my co-workers and the people I meet who work at other agencies or at management companies. I have met many incredible people. And I learn something every day from the people I interact with.

The hardest part of my job is the rental housing market. The rents have gotten so high, and the availability is so tight -- as you all already know.

**What fuels your passion for housing work?**

When I am having trouble finding housing or resources for people, and I start feeling discouraged, often something happens to inspire me or give me hope. Sometimes it has been someone seeking assistance who inspires me with their courage and strength, or something they say. Sometimes it is that all of a sudden the pieces fall into place for someone I am assisting and they get into housing. All of that energizes me to do this work.

**One random fact about you!**

I am a big watcher of the TV news in Portland, Oregon since our son moved out there last summer. Homelessness and housing are big issues there. I find the coverage of these issues and the solutions being considered and tried very interesting.

**One thing you want people to know about doubled up homelessness in our schools/community?**

Doubled up homelessness is homelessness. It is not someone staying with and visiting a friend. If not resolved in time, doubled up homelessness can turn into a shelter stay or living on the street. It is all homelessness. It is all stressful and difficult for the people experiencing it.

# 6



## Ways to Help...



BPNN is one of the largest food pantries in Dane County -- and the only pantry entirely led and operated by volunteers. When you volunteer with BPNN, you can feel satisfaction knowing you are helping families and meeting neighbors who also value giving their time and talents to help. Get started by signing up for Volunteer Orientation. BPNN offers sessions on Thursday afternoons from 1:30-3pm and two Saturday per month from 9-10:30am. Visit [www.bpnn.org](http://www.bpnn.org) to register, make a donation and learn more about BPNN's mission to end hunger and fight poverty.

# 7

This newsletter is brought to you by the Doubled Up Workgroup.

Since 2019, we have been working to raise awareness about doubled up homelessness in our community and advocating for resources to support this population.

Questions or comments? Email us at [doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com](mailto:doubledupworkgroup@gmail.com)

