

## Haven House

# a hand up from homelessness

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**W**ith an ill husband, autistic son and traumatized daughter, it's an understatement to say Amy Barrett is dealing with a tremendous burden.

She isn't shouldering it alone, though. Barrett and her family are among those who call Haven House Transitional Living Center in Olathe home.

"My family was the victim of a crime," Barrett explained, as she sat in Haven House's playroom Dec. 21, her words contrasting with the rush of activity in the halls, as residents prepared for a Christmas "shopping spree."

"My husband took it hard. He got sick and was unable to work. I was taking care of him and our children. We tried for me to work. It didn't work out," she said.

Barrett, husband, Fran, their daughter and two boys, found themselves homeless. Zimmerman House of Montrose, which ordinarily houses youths aging out of the foster system, provided the Barrett's with a place to stay while they undertook the application process at Haven House and awaited placement.

### About Haven House and how to help

- Haven House is a faith-based organization designed to help homeless people become self-sustaining. It is located at 4806 N. River Road in Olathe. (Go past Olathe on U.S. 50 and turn left onto Carnation Road, then follow Carnation to River Road. From there, turn left and proceed about half a mile. Haven House is on the left.)

- To apply for a vacancy, call Haven House at (970) 323-5280. Eligibility requirements and background checks apply.

- To help Haven House, call the above number to volunteer, or make a donation to Haven House, P.O. Box 3122, Montrose, Colo., 81402. You can also donate online at haven-househomeless.org.

- Further information may be found on the website at haven-househomeless.org.

Although living dormitory-style at Haven House took some adjustment, Barrett said she's happy to be there.

"It has provided a roof over my family's head. They have a lot of resources," she said.

The transitional living center recently partnered with ReHire Colorado, a state transitional employment program. Through it, Barrett was able to secure a part-time job.

"All of our participants who are able to work have gotten a job," said Rose Berheul, Haven House director of operations.

### From humble beginnings to powerful force

Haven House, the brainchild of Larry and Lillian Fredericksen, first opened its doors in 2011, in a former farmworkers dormitory then owned by Montrose County Housing Authority.

It accepts families and single mothers who pass its vetting process, but the goal is more than just a place for homeless families to stay: It is a place that tailors resources and support programs to the unique needs of each family, with an eye to changing the situations that led residents to homelessness.

Earlier this year, Haven House faced homelessness itself, when the housing authority decided to sell the building. Ultimately, Haven House was able to purchase the facility, putting an end to the uncertainty.

"We were able to raise the money with the combination of donations and bridge loans," Larry Fredericksen said.

Three private individuals put up \$220,000 to help complete the purchase. Haven House has since applied for grants through the Colorado Department of Local Affairs and foundations in order to pay off the loans and also furnish



Volunteer Pearl Cooling of Montrose assists young shoppers at Haven House's Shepherd's Shopping Spree on Dec. 21.



Eve Becker-Doyle (center) visits with her fellow volunteers over lunch before the Shepherd's Shopping Spree at Haven House on Dec. 21.

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