

WELCOME TO OUR

# Monthly Newsletter

*we're so glad you're here!*

## Hi Supporters & Friends:

The start of a new year is often seen as a clean slate, an opportunity to start over and leave the past behind. I recently learned there's actually a name for this: the "fresh start effect."

In many ways, that's exactly what we do here at SAS, we help provide opportunities for a fresh start. And sometimes... that fresh start comes with an encore. A fresh start, again.

I mean, how many times have you set a New Year's resolution and thought, this is the year only to find yourself restarting by February? (No judgment. We've all been there.)

As you'll see on **Page 3**, BJ shares a story of helping a household find a fresh start after supporting them during a previous crisis. On **Page 5**, Megan tells a similar story, offering another fresh start to a family who found themselves in crisis once again.

But that's the cool thing about fresh starts, right? They come with fresh perspective, renewed determination, and new tools and resources to move forward. Crises happen, and everyone deserves the chance to begin again without judgment.

That commitment to meeting people without judgment also means paying close attention to where the needs are greatest. As we shared in our December newsletter, we conducted the Annual Point-in-Time Count last week. We identified nine individuals in need of a fresh start, and we look forward to supporting them on a path toward goals they've set for themselves for housing stability. The full report will be shared at the April CoC meeting—keep an eye on our social media for the date, time, and location.

As you read through this issue, don't forget to take note of the impactful fresh starts reflected in numbers on our Impact Snapshot on **Page 2**—and the fresh starts Becky offers every caller, every day, through our Centralized Intake Line on **Page 4**.

No matter where this new year finds our community, your partnership helps create fresh starts when they're needed most, thanks for being here with us and keeping the fresh start effect going.

*Katie*



# JANUARY IMPACT SNAPSHOT



## CENTRALIZED INTAKE:

**408**

Households connected to housing support

**14**

Referrals

## Noteworthy Trends

**Investment in crisis stabilization**  
Client assistance under restricted funds increased significantly this month—from \$3,451.56 to \$5,760—reflecting both rising needs and our ability to respond when households are at risk of instability.

**Community support driving impact**  
Over the past seven months (July–January), SAS has provided \$48,690.51 in direct assistance through donations, church partnerships, and private grants—exceeding the \$45,453.18 provided through state and federal funding. This demonstrates the powerful role community investment plays in meeting urgent needs and filling critical gaps.



## SAS DIRECT CONNECTIONS: ALL STAFF

**202**

Individuals connected to services and resources

**323**

Hours of Effort



## STABILITY SUPPORT FUNDRAISING, PRIVATE GRANTS & COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS FUNDS



### STABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES PROVIDED

**3**

Households Aided with Rent/Mortgage Payments

\$2,876.00  
in Assistance



### UTILITY ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

**13**  
Households

\$6,127.39  
in Assistance



## RESTRICTIVE FUNDING STATE & FEDERAL HOUSING GRANT PROGRAMS



### HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

0 Rapid Rehousing  
1 Targeted Prevention  
2 Emergency Shelter  
2 Case Management Interviews

\$5,760.00  
in Assistance



### HOUSING REFERRALS RECEIVED

2 Rapid Rehousing  
7 Targeted Prevention  
0 Emergency Shelter

9  
Total Referrals

# Stability Support



**BJ Stout-Ritter**  
Housing Stability  
Coordinator

If you know someone who has a disconnection on their utility or needs propane, oil, or wood, have them call BJ.



## Keeping the Lights On: A Veteran Family Stabilized

This month, utility assistance helped a disabled Veteran and his three children avoid having their electricity disconnected. The father is living with a traumatic brain injury and seizures, which forced him to leave a job that required travel. Previously, his income combined with VA benefits had made it possible to keep up with household expenses, but his health challenges quickly changed that reality.

This household had reached out for help last year when a medical setback put their mortgage at risk. Through the Salvation Army Mortgage Fund and a Sentara Grant, foreclosure was prevented and the family regained stability. This month, when an electric shutoff notice arrived, assistance from the Salvation Army Utilities Fund reduced the balance to just \$12.56 out of pocket. That support allowed the family to catch up on other bills and regain a sense of security.

## Preventing Evictions Through Community Support

In addition to utility assistance, three households received rental assistance this month after facing eviction notices. These families did not qualify for our other homeless response programs. Each household had experienced sudden hardship, including job loss or medical emergencies, leaving them unable to keep up with rent.

Emergency funding through Salvation Army resources made it possible to intervene before eviction occurred. These funds serve as a critical safety net when no other options remain available, helping families avoid homelessness during temporary crises.

*Salvation Army Red Kettle donations stay in Shenandoah County and directly support local families in crisis. These funds, along with support from local churches, private grants, & donations make it possible to meet urgent needs throughout the county.*

***Thank you to all the supporters that make these programs possible!***

Shenandoah Alliance  
for Shelter



Siberts House Program

Our two female residents are both actively working toward employment and permanent housing. One participant recently lost her job through no fault of her own but has remained motivated. She completed two interviews during the last week of January and has reached out to several potential landlords. In addition, she is enrolled in both online and in-person classes through Laurel Ridge Community College.

The second participant is working with DARS, a program that assists individuals with disabilities in gaining employment. They are supporting her with resume writing and interview preparation and even helped her purchase appropriate clothing for interviews. She is excited about the opportunity and eager to enter the workforce.

Each resident participates in weekly case management with the Site Manager to track progress, address barriers, and provide required documentation. In addition, residents receive ongoing support from the Housing Counselor, who helps coordinate wraparound services and prepare them for long-term housing stability after leaving the site.

Sibert's House continues to grow stronger every day thanks to the compassion and partnership of our community. Would your group, church, or organization like to provide occasional meals or pantry staples to support our residents? Reach out to us at [alliance4shelter@gmail.com](mailto:alliance4shelter@gmail.com)!

(occupancy is gender-specific and rotates based on current residents)

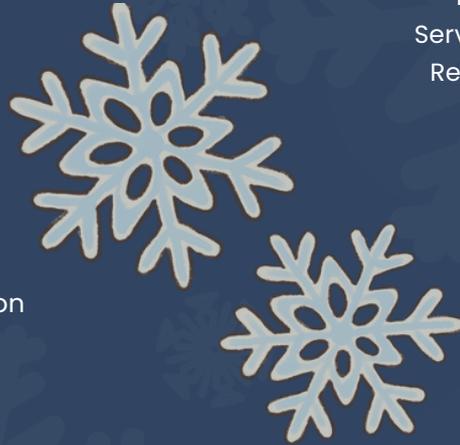
\$48,690.51

**In Financial Assistance provided to Shenandoah County  
Residents in both Utility & Rent/Mortgage Assistance.  
(July 2025-June 2026)**

# Our Funding Partners

## Partner Organizations & Private Grants

Woodstock Ministerial Association  
Strasburg Local Relief  
Maurertown Brethren Church  
Wakeman's Grove  
St. John's Bosco  
Edinburg Ministerial Association  
New Market Presbyterian Church  
St. Mary's Church of the Pine  
Shenandoah Community Foundation  
Sentara Health  
United Way

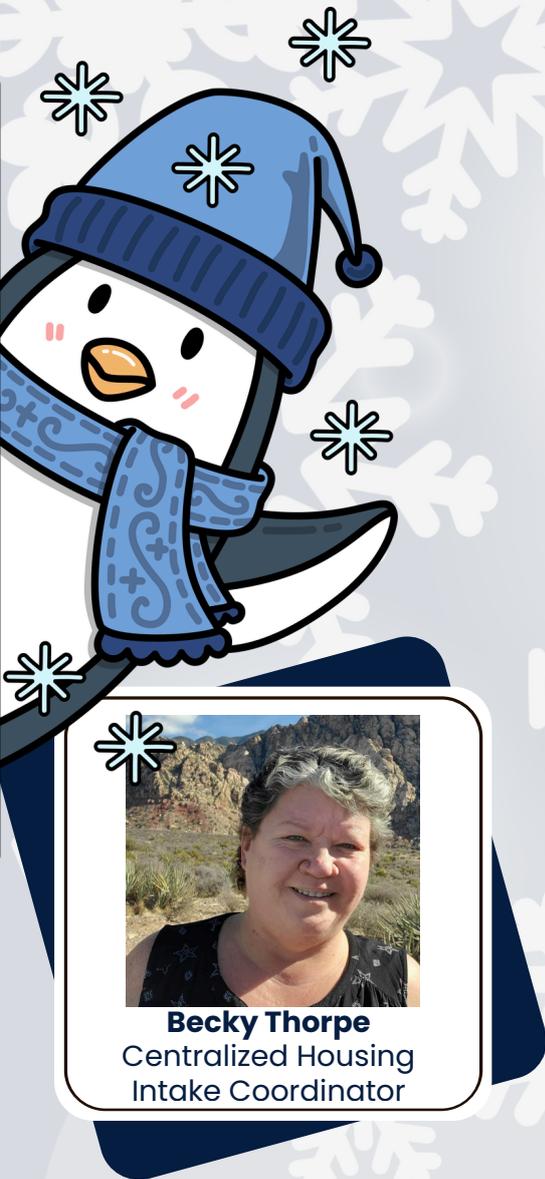


## Salvation Army Funds

Funds from Shenandoah County Salvation Army Service unit to administer the funds collected in the Red Kettles for utility/rent/mortgage assistance to Shenandoah County residents.

## State & Federal Grants

Virginia Homeless Solutions Program Grant in partnership with the Western VA CoC to serve the counties of Shenandoah, Page & Warren



## Centralized Housing Intake

### **Call Volume:**

Call volume increased in January, and demand for assistance remained consistently high, with 14 referrals compared to 12 in December. Behind these numbers are families facing mounting pressure as housing costs continue to outpace income, leaving little room for recovery when even minor disruptions occur.

### **Key Needs Identified:**

Affordable housing remains severely constrained, and short-term stability is increasingly out of reach for many households. Families are being forced into expensive, temporary, or overcrowded living situations that erode financial security, disrupt family well-being, and make long-term stability nearly unattainable.

### **Call to Action:**

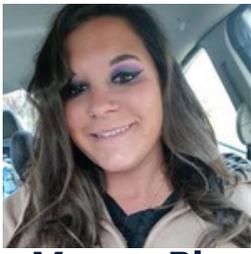
Fluctuations in call volume do not reflect a reduction in need—the housing crisis remains urgent and unresolved. This month's data underscores the critical need for sustained investment, coordinated partnerships, and decisive action to ensure every family in our community has access to safe, stable, and affordable housing.



**If you know someone who is experiencing a housing crisis, please have them call Centralized Housing Intake at 540-271-1701 to complete an eligibility screening.**



Learn about the CHI Program here: [continuumofcare513.com](https://www.continuumofcare513.com)



**Megan Bly**  
State Certified  
Housing Counselor

# Housing Corner

Calls this Month

97!

## Keeping Families Housed

This month, a former participant reached out for assistance after a court hearing resulted in the landlord being granted possession of her unit. It had been just over a year since her last service engagement. A core part of this work is approaching each situation without judgment.

While some families experience sudden crises, others face ongoing challenges related to employment and financial stability. In this case, the participant was open about struggling to maintain full-time work as a single mother of two while managing household expenses.

Through the Targeted Prevention Program, **\$4,860** in financial assistance was provided to help preserve her housing. She also received longer-term stability supports, including budget counseling, a personalized housing plan, and connections to financial literacy classes.

These are not quick services. Each prevention case requires extensive documentation—often totaling more than 75 pages for initial expenses alone. When a household is prepared to engage in the process, however, the impact can be substantial, both for the family and the broader community.

In Virginia, it costs taxpayers approximately **\$35,000 per year** to support one chronically unhoused individual through emergency room visits, jail stays, and emergency shelter use. By providing timely prevention assistance, we were able to keep this household safely housed during the cold winter months while saving taxpayers an estimated \$30,000 in homelessness-related costs. Without this intervention, the family would have been forced out of their home and into homelessness.



**\$45,453.18**

Financial Assistance provided in Fiscal Year 2026  
(July 2025–June 2026) to retain or obtain housing in  
the counties of Shenandoah, Page and Warren.

# Our February Calendar



**FEBRUARY 3<sup>RD</sup>: STRASBURG LEADSHARE**

**VHA FEDERAL IMPACT CALL**

**FEBRUARY 5<sup>TH</sup>: MONTHLY PARTNERSHIP MEETING W/ FAMILY PROMISE**

**FEBRUARY 9<sup>TH</sup>: CoC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 10<sup>TH</sup>: CoC BfZ CASE CONFERENCING**

**PACA MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 11<sup>TH</sup>: WOODSTOCK LEADSHARE**

**FEBRUARY 12<sup>TH</sup>: REGIONAL FOCUS CoC MEETING**

**NON-PROFIT COUNCIL MEETING**

**SAS BOARD MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 13<sup>TH</sup>: COMMUNITY COALITION MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 16<sup>TH</sup>: OFFICE CLOSED / PRESIDENT'S DAY**

**FEBRUARY 17<sup>TH</sup>: CoC MEDIA & ADVOCACY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**CoC COMPLIANCE & EVALUATION COMMITTEE MEETING**

**FEBRUARY 25<sup>TH</sup>: WOODSTOCK LEADSHARE**

**FEBRUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>: WARREN COALITION MEETING**



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(540) 459-3212

[alliance4shelter@gmail.com](mailto:alliance4shelter@gmail.com)

