

Housing Matters



Cornerstone Community Housing, Inc. has a two-fold mission. We are dedicated to helping men experiencing homelessness rebuild their lives and to changing attitudes toward homelessness through outreach and education.

THANKS TO YOU, THOM COULDN'T BE HAPPIER.

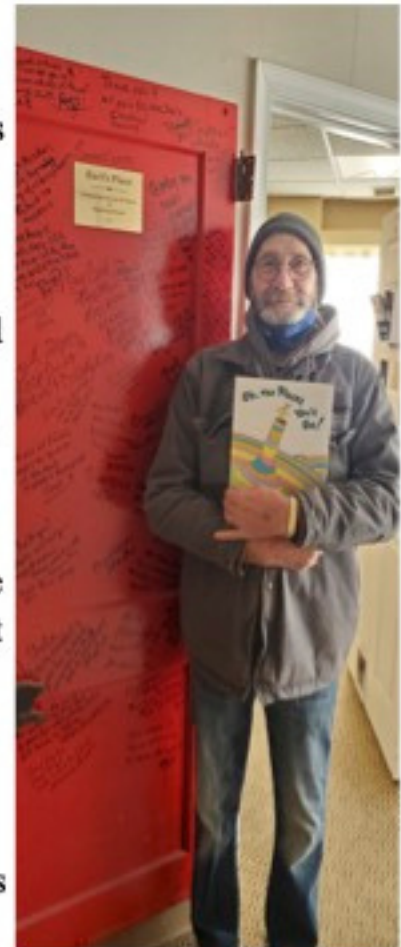
The term “starving artist” is typically used to describe those who choose to pursue creative dreams. Thom W., however, brings a much more literal meaning to the title.

Thom, a formerly homeless man spent his time at Earl’s Place focusing on himself as well as his passion for drawing, which he’s cultivated since he was young.

Thom grew up in the Anne Arundel County area where he spent much of his childhood outdoors with his father. “I had a great, normal childhood. I played outside, I played in my father’s junkyard. I considered myself lucky to be in that environment. Making forts, digging tunnels. I had a great childhood.”

Thom emphasizes that people who become homeless are not confined to stereotypes. “A lot of people have this idea that homeless people are bad people. But we come from all walks of life. Sometimes you just end up that way, y’know.”

Thom’s homelessness started from a drug addiction. After using marijuana for several years, it led him to other drugs that made climbing out of addiction feel inescapable. His mental health was thrown into jeopardy, as he described himself feeling worthless and with no desire to wake up each day.



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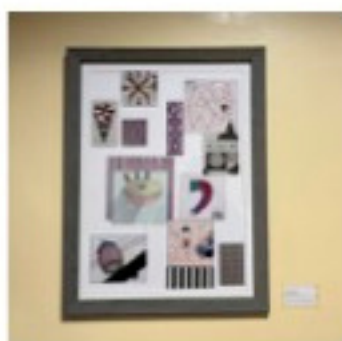
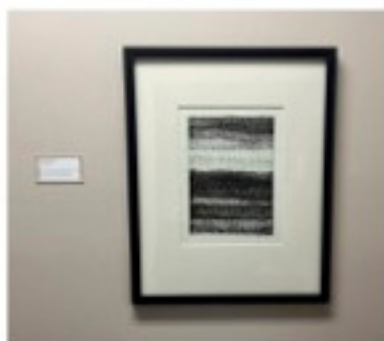
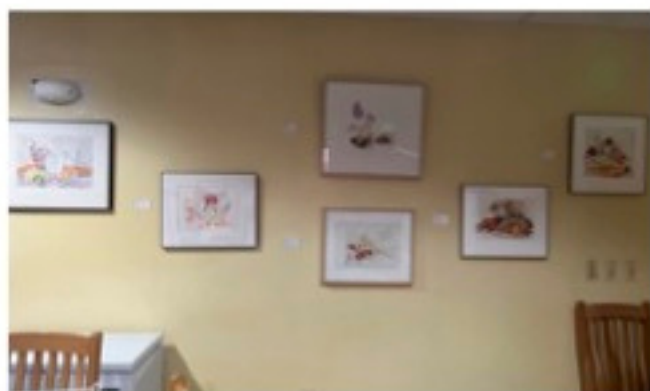
Partners in the Community

When Sheila saw this announcement on Facebook, *Calling All Nonprofits. We're looking for five Baltimore/Washington DC nonprofits interested in receiving original artwork to permanently exhibit within their organization*, she knew she had to apply!

The announcement continued, *Partnering nonprofits select the artwork that speaks to their mission and aesthetic at one of our exhibitions, and at the show's closing, the artwork will be permanently gifted to the organization. This is an exciting and fulfilling experience for everyone involved that is made available free of charge.*

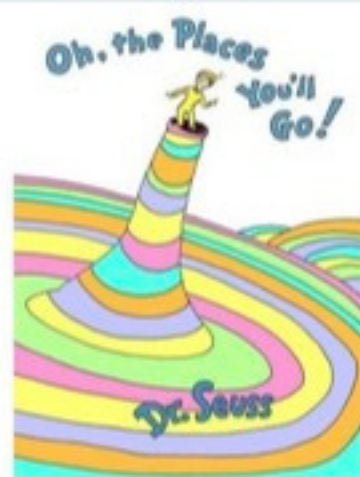
Thanks to the **Art Connection in the Capital Region** for selecting Earl's Place. Not only did we receive a number of pieces from the exhibition, we also received some additional pieces that the Executive Director, Julie Cavnor, thought would look good in our dining room area. She was right!

We invite you to stop by and see all the pieces.



UPDATES

Congratulations to Carlton, Edward, Floyd, James, Ronald, Terrence, and Thomas on their moves to permanent housing.



Congratulations to Kevin, Linwood, Robert, Terrence, and Tim on obtaining employment.

We are excited to have the students from Goucher College and their professor, Phaye Poliakoff-Chen, back on Thursday evenings. The students and men are prolifically creating all kinds of art which was displayed at the College on March 24.



“I personally believe that weed is a gateway drug,” Thom said, “because it was easy to slip into other drugs and behaviors I shouldn’t have been doing.” He describes his experience as a slippery slope. He was what is called a functional addict. “I was using and working. I was using so I could function, and working so I could use. It was this terrible, vicious cycle. Neglecting one thing leads to another, and before you know it, you can’t pay rent.”

Thom was homeless for six months before taking action to check himself into a rehabilitation program. “The help’s there if you ask for it. If you ask the right people, there are always people willing to help you, but you have to help yourself first.”

Thom describes Earl’s place as the perfect place to do just that. He heard about Earl’s Place from several people he met at rehabilitation programs, and after hearing good reviews, decided to call. Due to high demand, Tom was placed on the waiting list. “I had no plans,” Tom said, “So I thought ‘why not.’ I’m so glad I did.”

Thom describes his experience at Earl’s Place as invaluable. “Earl’s Place allows you to get a foothold on what you need to do. You’re your own person, nobody’s pressuring you to do anything, you can choose to help yourself.”

“Nobody had any faith in me, but I decided to make the most of it.” Thom pushed himself to improve, and as of May 24, 2021 he was two years sober. He credits Earl’s Place with getting his life back on track. “Earl’s Place is a good place to put more effort into yourself,” Thom said, “My main goal is to find my own place, and the case manager, Jim, is helping me do that.”

Thom’s plans are to earn back his driver’s license and purchase a vehicle so he can visit his family. He has two daughters and a son. He keeps in touch with them, but plans to reestablish a stronger relationship with them in the future.

- by Isabella Maxey

Update: In January 2022, Thom moved to his own apartment in a senior housing complex in Canton. According to him, this is a dream come true and he couldn’t be happier.

Together, we are changing lives!



Thank you to everyone who “joined” us for the 2022 Resolution Run. We are grateful for your ongoing support. Fingers crossed that we can gather together in-person in 2023.

A special thank you to our sponsors:

Chesapeake Association. United Church of Christ

First & St. Stephen’s UCC

Immanuel (Catonsville) UCC

Thanks to Jan and Nathan for sharing pictures. Kurt (top left), Jan (top right), Nathan (bottom left) and Mary and Scott (bottom right)



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