

Press Release: The Herrin House of Hope and Hands of Hope Foundation are excited to announce the launch of our PHASE 2 PROJECT.

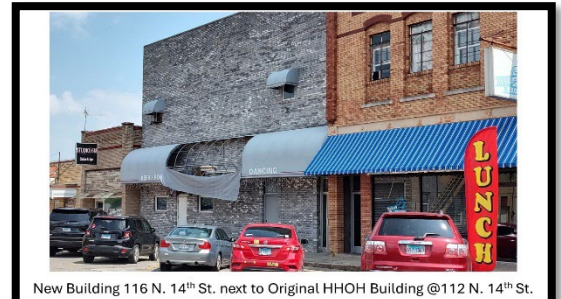
Herrin, IL, September 8, 2024 – The Herrin House of Hope, located at 112 N. 14th St in Herrin and serving the Herrin and Williamson County region will celebrate its 12th complete year of operations on Sunday, September 8th at our 13th annual Family Fun Day from 12:30-6:00p to benefit and celebrate our 12 years of operation and service to the Herrin Community on the grounds of Community of Faith Church.

The Herrin House of Hope and Hands of Hope Foundation are joining forces and are excited to announce the launch of their **PHASE 2 PROJECT** with the acquisition and now beginning of the renovation of the adjoining sister building to the House of Hope, the former CC Club located at 116 N. 14th St. In late 2023, the Herrin House of Hope acquired the former CC Club building. Pastor Troy Benitone, Board President for Herrin House of Hope & Hands of Hope Foundation shared, *"We were also blessed to receive a generous gift of \$80,000 from the Julia Harrison Bruce & Fred G Harrison Foundations to match our initial investment in getting the building ready for its new assignment to serve the Herrin and Williamson County region as we begin PHASE 2."*

PHASE 2 is an exciting expansion of an existing service and the addition of what will be 2 new services to the region.

First the expansion and development of **The Herrin House**

of Hope Commodities Distribution Center. The lower north section and rear of the facility will be designed to receive and distribute commodities to the families and households of our region in need. Commodities will now be received in the rear and distributed through the north front entrance (116 N 14th) on a relieved and orderly schedule when the updates are completed. Currently, commodities are delivered by large trucks, sorted by pallets (rain, snow, heat, etc.) by volunteers in the back area. Some items are moved inside and upstairs. Others are stacked in smaller walk-ins and refrigerators. At nearly the same time, due to limited space, House of Hope Commodities Distribution Teams are forced to orchestrate the distribution to cars lined up and waiting around the alley and into the street to receive the much-needed commodities. John Steve, Executive Director shared with us on the Why to this task. *"We just have no other place or space to hold the items, so our volunteers are forced to distribute the resources as fast as possible- rain, hail, heat or snow. All this has to be done in a single day and rapidly, because we often do not have enough storage for perishable foods and items*



sensitive to weather. Further, the back is also the kitchen entrance and thrift store rear entrance. So, you can imagine, It creates quite a little Herrin traffic jam and certainly a lot of activity at once. We so appreciate the community being understanding of what has been happening. But we are excited that the new distribution will allow us to receive on one day, organize and distribute more safely and orderly through our front entrance on other days. We know our neighbors will appreciate this and this will end our alley traffic jams. A win for all!"

The back area of the facility will have a single level surface that will allow unloading of pallets, along with dry goods being able to be taken into the new dry goods storage room, and we hope to add 2- 20 Foot Refrigerator and Freezer Storage Containers that will be able to receive pallets in them for cold and frozen storage items. Pastor Troy is looking for local individuals, families, organization and businesses that would consider helping us with a generous tax-deductible gift to secure these 2 units. The cost will be about \$16,000 each for approximately \$32,000. You can reach Pastor Troy at Troy@hohfoundation.org if you want to help make this dream a reality in serving our community.

The Herrin House of Hope being an emergency feeding center for Williamson County Emergency Services during crisis, (i.e. Covid) and now with our ability to add more commodities distribution and other services is working with our Williamson County Emergency Service Director to find a backup generator to sustain the building through all emergency events as a hub for serving our community.

PHASE 2 also includes 2 new services.

The first is being led by the **Hands of Hope Foundation (hohfoundation.org)**, known for doing medical clinics, surgical centers and med-surg outreaches in overseas countries. Hands of Hope Foundation based out of Marion, will help lead the development in the South front entrance of what will be known as the **Hope Community Wellness "GAP"**

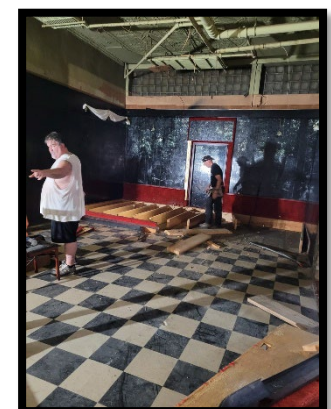
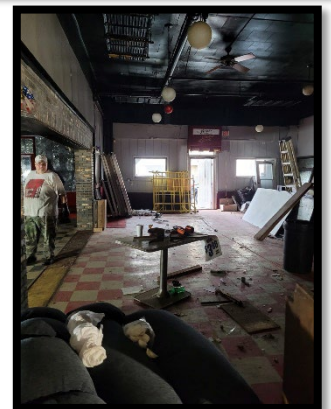
Clinic and the Hope Community Wellness "GAP" Mobile Clinic. The clinic will do wellness check outreaches through its mobile clinic all through the area. When persons are identified who need additional care, but do not already have an established care provider, they will be schedule for a visit to the **Hope Community Wellness "GAP" Clinic** with a goal of helping to address their current wellness issues and working with them to get into one of our many local care providers. The "GAP" Clinic will be partnering to provide basic medical assistance and will be partnering with area leaders in Behavioral Health Care and Social Services to give people an advocacy team to help them out of the crisis. Pastor Troy reports, *"We hope to work with the local major care providers to get patients set-up with state programs so they can receive long-term care through our many amazing care providers in our region. The "GAP" has a vision to stabilize and help people in need find long-term care and help them on the road to full recovery. The clinic will use innovative partnerships and educational awareness programs and will be supported by care providers donating their time to help*



their fellow citizens. Bi-County Health Department has been such a blessing in leading, guiding and mentoring us toward this future endeavor. We are grateful that we have been accepted into SPARC (Shawnee Preparedness and Response Coalition) and value the mentoring and guidance we are receiving toward our vision of establishing this vision."

Finally, Phase 2 will also include the development of the **Hope Emergency Shelter**. The entire second floor of the facility will be set-up to serve as an Emergency Shelter with shower, cots and emergency clothing and supplies to meet emergency needs during natural or emergency disasters (i.e. Tornadoes, Gas main breaks, flooding, etc...) as well as extreme cold or extreme heat crisis that strike our community. The Hope Emergency Shelter will be available for activation when local authority requests emergency shelter assistance for those most vulnerable. The facility will be opened when requested by our local Mayor, the Herrin FD or PD, and/or our Williamson County Emergency Services Director to provide relief in crisis situations. It will provide a place where emergency services, like the Red Cross, the Salvation Army and our own Herrin House of Hope can work together to help people in these special situations. The **Hope Emergency Shelter** is being developed to support a request from the Williamson County Emergency Services Agency. Williamson County currently has no place like this available to local authorities outside the lobbies of its various city halls, fire department bays and police department lobbies. The vision of the **Hope Emergency Shelter** is to be there to assist our emergency services during major life-threatening events in our community.

John Steve, Exec Director at the Herrin House of Hope shared: *"The work has just begun, and our facilities will be in transition over the next year or two, while we get them ready. Volunteers in every trade are already working with us, along with all kinds of volunteer laborers. The Commodities Distribution Center is targeted for some time in early 2024. The Hope Wellness "Gap" Clinic is being targeted for late 2025 and the Hope Emergency Shelter is slated for 2026. You can watch on the Herrin House of Hope Facebook page for opportunities to come and serve as we work on the facilities. We Need Volunteer Skilled Carpenters & Willing Labors to team up with Pastor Troy, Don Reis Jr., Steve McKeown & John Steve who are leading the efforts, to work on the new HOH Clinic & Shelter and HHOH Commodities Distribution Center. We will meet on the alley side of the Herrin House of Hope at 112 N. 14th St to Start Each Workday. Please bring tools for light carpentry & wear appropriate clothing. More Workdays will be scheduled as we move forward into the Fall-Winter.*



PHASE 1: The Herrin House of Hope began 12 years ago with a vision that no one should be hungry or in need and without Hope in our area. In year 1, we held our first Family Fun Day and through Church partnerships, Businesses, Civic Organizations, and Individuals, we raised the funds needed to purchase and renovate our current facility at 112 N.14th St, where the former Illinois Café stood. We have done well and thrived in our efforts. The Herrin House of Hope is *“far more than a Soup Kitchen”*, it is the heart of the Herrin Community that says family sticks together through thick and thin. When COVID reared its face- every restaurant and food provider closed, the House of Hope was deemed an emergency feeding center by Herrin Mayor Frattini and Williamson County ESDA. They served to-go meals to first responders, healthcare professionals and every family that had a need throughout our entire community during the COVID crisis. 12 years ago, this was a vision and mission, today it is the reality of a broad-based ministry which was designed by the partnership of churches and citizens in the Herrin area to give the people of our region a boost in fighting poverty and overcoming times of hardship fueled by Hope. The Herrin House of Hope provides meals Monday-Friday, each-and-every week, for between 150-200 people a day or around 750-1000 meals per week. During the height of the Covid shutdown, we saw demands dramatically increase to nearly 300-500 meals a day, to as many as 2818 per week at the height. Every week and through the crisis, the House of Hope has been there, as an essential emergency feeding center for the last 12 years, providing some 400,000 meals. Everyone that needs a meal—receives one at the House of Hope, thanks to incredible community support!

In Summary during our 12 years of operation from 2013-2024:

- *Served some 400,000 meals for needy adults and children.*
- *Served over 35,000 persons through our auxiliary emergency food pantry & commodities distribution program since it opened in July 2014, 10 years ago.*
- *Served over 20,000 people in our Thrift Store, since it opened in October 2014.*
- *Seen over 500+ students go through our on-site GED Program led by John A. Logan Jr. College, since it began in 2014.*
- *Now in our 8th Summer (May 30 to August 31) offering our Children's Free Summer Meals Program. We have fed over 25,000 meals to children 0-18.*
- *Blessed with over 18,000 volunteer days served by those saints who have come in and out of our doors, just this year, to share the Hope and Love of Christ with those that need a hand of Hope in the Herrin Community, through a day of service.*

You can learn more about us through the Herrin House of Hope Facebook Page or at www.herrinhouseofhope.org.

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