In An Instant

It was early evening and a simple plan for dinner ended in a grease fire that set off the sprinkler system, flooding House of Ruth Maryland’s six transitional apartments. All six apartments suffered extensive damage and survivors living in those units had to be relocated. In addition to the damage to walls, flooring, and cabinets, all of the furniture was damaged beyond repair.

“It was a really discouraging time,” said Janice Miller, Director of Programs and Clinical Services at House of Ruth Maryland. “These apartments provide a safe haven for some of our survivors who aren’t quite ready to go back into housing in the community yet and the fire and subsequent flooding created yet another trauma for them,” said Miller.

While the units were covered by insurance, the insurance coverage didn’t provide for everything and with the flood happening just weeks before the COVID pandemic, the process of getting the apartments back online has been even more problematic. As summer rolled along, the structural repairs were finally completed, however, the complications and increased expenses related to COVID meant that there wasn’t funding to cover the furniture requirements for the apartments. That’s when the Baltimore chapter of the Real Estate Staging Association stepped in!

“We really wanted to help women who were trying to start over,” said Shoshana Schmel, President of the Baltimore Chapter of the Real Estate Staging Association and owner of SPOTLIGHT Home Staging and Design. “We have furniture that is used for staging, so it’s very lightly used, but it no longer works for us and would be perfect for someone just starting out.”

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That vision of giving back to the community came to fruition, at least for the first apartment on August 19th when Rachel Wiederhold of Five Star Staging, Andre Bailey of Staging by Andrea, Cheryl Hannan of Poplar Home Staging and Design, and Elena Theoharidis of Charisma Home Staging came to House of Ruth Maryland with a truck full of furniture and home décor to stage the first apartment. By the end of the day, the apartment was beautifully decorated and ready for the final touches before handing the keys over to a survivor.

“It was a wonderful day to work in our Emergency Shelter,” said Kristina Page, Associate Director for Stability Services at House of Ruth Maryland. “Staff were so excited to share with one of our current survivors that the unit would be available for her so she could work on job placements, school placements for her children and so much more – she doesn’t have to worry about where she’s going to sleep at night”.

While staying in the short-term apartments, survivors will be able to access House of Maryland services, such as counseling, legal services, our state licensed, onsite childcare center and can work with their Client Services Coordinator to connect with other community services. Survivors can also work with our Job Navigator, to either find employment or to find training to improve their current employment or find better employment based on their skills set.

Next up, the Real Estate Staging Association is working on outfitting the remaining apartments, so that the apartments will soon be back online, doing what they’re meant to do, giving survivors a solid place to start fresh.

Friends and Family Group

This fall, House of Ruth Maryland is hosting a Friends and Family Educational Series in Baltimore County. The series consists of five sessions over a three-week period and touches on the barriers and abuse victims face while also educating friends and family on how to support the victims and survivors through these barriers.

Sessions include: Recognizing IPV, Why Leaving Isn’t Always an Option, Safety Planning with Victims & Survivors, Community Resources for Victims & Survivors, and Setting Healthy Boundaries and Practicing Self Care.

Each participant will walk away with a better understanding of IPV, how it effects victims both during and after the abusive relationship, and how to best support their loved one without compromising their own mental health and safety.

The first series will begin September 28, 2020.

To register for Friends & Family, email the following information to callcenter@hruthmd.org or text 443-540-5776
• Name (can use a pseudonym)
• Phone number or email & preferred contact method
• Best time to be reached

For more information visit www.hruth.org/friendsandfamily.

Summer Arts Passport

With the usual enrichment programs and camps closed throughout the nation over the summer, the Baltimore City Arts Council stepped up to enrich the lives of children who are staying at home throughout the area. With the leadership of Arts Every Day, the Council crafted the Baltimore Arts Passport, consisting of a booklet and art supply kit, to be distributed for free by organizations providing much-needed services throughout the city. House of Ruth Maryland is so grateful to have received dozens of kits in both English and Spanish, as we agree with the BCAC that “[t]he synergy between the arts and mental health is well documented. Arts interventions are known to support the treatment and management of stress, anxiety, and depression and increase emotional resilience in children and families.”

For more information visit www.hruth.org/donate/resa.

For more information on this project, please contact Kristina Page, Associate Director of Stability Services at House of Ruth Maryland. To contribute to the project, please visit www.hruth.org/donate/resa.
In Memory Of  Each year, House of Ruth Maryland is fortunate to receive gifts made in memory of individuals who are no longer with us. These gifts are a tribute to the person who has passed and they honor the memory of those we love and the things that were most important to them. We would like to recognize the following individuals who have been honored with a memorial tribute between February 1, 2020 and July 31, 2020. We thank the generous donors who make it possible for us to recognize their loved ones.

- Ethel Anderson
- Andy Barasda
- Zelleke Bellete
- Albert Bohon
- Anthony Bosley
- India Chapple
- Brent Chillemi
- Annie Colbert
- Linda Cymrot
- Marion Decker
- Marion Di Crispino
- Chris Elliott
- Zillah Ezra
- Laura Gallina
- JoAnn Gidos
- Garnett Henley
- Mary Hlavin
- Austin & Elizabeth Kilian
- Marlene King
- Judy Kramer
- Joyce Kroeller
- Helen Langrall
- Sylvia Lederman
- Donald Lockwood
- Rebecca Martinez-Greiwe
- Lucy McCarthy
- Margaret McLane
- Chery Moncrieffe
- Mary Mussoline
- Carole Myer
- Theresa Roanhorse
- Tom Ronci
- Walter Schneckenburger
- Patricia Scullen
- Kathy Smith
- Edith Stark
- Juile Thompson
- Jeanne Trexler
- Anna Williams
- Rose & Jerry Wurmser
- Sabine Yanul
- Helen York

SPECIAL THANKS TO:
We want to extend a very special thank you to some of our amazing volunteers and other donors making adult and children’s masks for our clients and staff:

- Linda Silvern (donations volunteer),
- Chris Liming (B-More Bags volunteer),
- Becky Felix (Ruth’s Closet volunteer),
- Mollie Lange (leader of the Baltimore MD Team of DAYS FOR GIRLS),
- Marjorie Foreman (B-More Bags volunteer),
- Margaret Crews (B-More Bags volunteer),
- Laura Baltatzis (BMB volunteer) for making and giving away masks encouraging people to donate to HRM in lieu of payment, and
- Terri Wurmser (B-More Bags volunteer) for collecting and delivering masks to shelter.

- JoAnn and Roxanne at Wells Discount Liquors for selling several B-More Bags designs, including the Bottle Bag, at their store on York Road.
- Land’s End store going out of business in Annapolis Mall for donating women’s clothing.
- Lane Bryant store going out of business in Arundel Mills Mall for donating women’s clothing and accessories.
- To Molly Scalion, owner of Wear It’s At, for donating jewelry and many fabulous clothing items for Ruth’s Closet and to Ellen Subock for helping coordinate the details and drop-offs!
OCTOBER 21, 2020

In-person! Join us on Wednesday, October 21 at Towson Town Center (in the Weis parking lot). We’ll be collecting donations from 9 am – 6 pm. Help us FILL THE HOUSE with diapers, wipes, formula, new towels, twin size sheets, blankets, pillows, comforters and new underwear for women and children.