

MardiBras 2017



Mardi Bras Party Host 101

Throw a party, make a difference!

There are more than 1,800 homeless women living in Spokane each day. Meeting their basic needs can be a struggle for Hope House and the Women's Hearth. Imagine not having access to bras, underwear and personal hygiene items due to poverty and homelessness. Physiology and biology are facts of life – women shouldn't be punished because of it. You can help! Celebrate Fat Tuesday, February 28, 2017 by hosting a Mardi Bras Party and collect monetary donations, bras, underwear, pads, tampons and bus passes.

How to host a Mardi Bras Party:

Invite your friends – have a party at home, rent a room, plan on attending one of our events. The ideas are endless! There are 1,800 homeless women, let's get 1,800 women to participate!

Introduce your friends – not to each other, to our mission! Information about the Women's Hearth and Hope House is on the back of this sheet. You can also schedule a tour on-site for your donation drop off and bring some friends, or ask a staff member to attend your event.

Send a reminder – send an electronic save the date card, call, email, make a facebook event and post some updates. Remind your friends about your event about 72 hours in advance.

Keep a list – record the names of your guests and your friends who said they would like more information about Mardi Bras, Hope House or the Women's Hearth. We will send them a thank you note for their gift and some information about our life-saving programs.

Set up – make it festive! A Papier-mache bra you need to fill before the end of the night, feather masks and boas, strings of beads, door prizes made out of high heels you don't wear anymore. The skies the limit! Any idea that draws attention to the needs of the homeless women in Spokane is a good idea. Don't forget a bin for donations.

Take a picture – and then post it on social media or email it into us! Use the hashtag #spokanemardibras or #partyforpoverty.

Drop off – your donations at 525 W 2nd Avenue. You can also call the Mardi Bras contact of your choice and schedule a site tour or visit. Also, drop off the names of your guests and donors and any ideas you have to make Mardi Bras even better in 2018.

Thank you – and thank your guests. We can't end poverty and homelessness for women alone and you can't have a fabulous party without your friends. If you submit your guests' information they will receive an official MardiBras thank you from Volunteers of America and Transitions.

Can't party? Donate online: <https://npo.justgive.org/help4women> choose the program MardiBras

The Night Shift: **Volunteers of America's
Hope House**



Originally known as the Downtown Women's Shelter, Hope House was founded in response to the 1997 serial murders of women on the streets of Spokane to offer women protection from the violence. Operated by Volunteers of America since 2001, Hope House is dedicated to making a significant difference in the lives of homeless women.

Emergency Shelter

There are more than 1,800 homeless single women in Spokane, many with mental health or chemical dependency issues—all with nowhere to go. Named for the refuge it provides, Hope House offers safety from the dangerous streets to any woman regardless of her mental health status, chemical dependency issue or lifestyle. Hope House offers an environment of dignity, respect and compassion that honors the intrinsic value and unique experience of every woman. Thirty-four shelter beds are available each night. Each woman receives personal care including: nutritious food a hot shower, clean dry clothing, hygiene items, a warm bed, onsite case management, resource information and referrals to community resources

Permanent Supportive Housing

Hope House also offers 25 apartments for low-income women who are ready to leave the streets. These safe, affordable apartments offer women committed to working on the causes of their homelessness a supportive transition to living on their own. This residential program also includes individualized case management and opportunities for permanent housing.

Greatest needs: bras, tampons and bus passes.

Mardi Bras Contacts:

Jon Carollo: jcarollo@voaspokane.org or 509.624.2378

Stephanie Neumann: sneumann@voaspokane.org or 509.688.1117

11,400 shelter bed nights a year, for more than 350 women

The Day Shift: **Transitions' Women's Hearth**



Originally the Women's Drop-In Center, the Women's Hearth was founded by a Holy Names Sister living in recovery who walked the streets of downtown Spokane and asked women what they needed to live safely. From these interviews the Women's Hearth unique services were designed in 1991.

Basic Needs Service Center

The Women's Hearth creates a safe space for women who have experienced trauma and homelessness by offering women a "hearth" of welcome, respect and community. Our participants make approximately 20,000 visits to the Women's Hearth each year. Participants do not need to "qualify" for services. Services are provided with a focus on building community and connecting women to community services. We offer access to showers, phones, hygiene items, and provide a weekly food bank. Staff also provide crisis intervention and assist participants in accessing legal services, housing, health care and mental health services.

Community Center

In addition to meeting basic needs the Women's Hearth also provides access to community building activities. Art classes, independent living skills, Coffee House Karaoke, Knit and Crochet Circles and more resources help women connect with each other and build peer support networks. There is also a focus on health topics including living with chronic health conditions, nutrition, and chemical dependency recovery groups.

Greatest needs: bras, pads and bus passes.

Mardi Bras Contact:

Mary Tracey: mtracey@help4women.org or 509.994.9580

19,000 visits each year, for more than 1,200 women