

Hope House gets new funding

■ Homeless shelter receives \$10,000 grant to improve access

By **DEREK R. SMITH**
dsmith@greenfieldreporter.com

GREENFIELD – Hancock Hope House has received another grant to make the facility more handicapped-accessible.

Work will involve the facility's doors and women's restroom.

Funding will come from a \$10,000 grant from the Realtor Foundation, a private foundation operated by the Metropolitan Indianapolis Board of Realtors.

"The \$10,000 grant award from the Realtor Foundation has given us more than bricks and mortar," Ellie Delcomyn, executive director of Hope House, said in an e-mail. "It has given our residents a safe place to live while regaining their independence and self-esteem."

Hancock Hope House, 35 E. Pierson Street, was established in 1991. It provides shelter to homeless people and their families while helping them become self-sufficient.

Right now, the women's bathroom at Hope House isn't accessible to handicapped people. Consequently, when a handicapped female resident needs to use the bathroom, male residents have to leave the facility – or at least the men's bathroom area – so that the female can use the men's bathroom, Delcomyn said.

Also, the grant makes Hope House a welcoming environment for hosting the local out-of-school suspension program. It will also enable Hope House to begin a program called "Breaking the Cycle of Substance Abuse" that helps young people overcome drug and alcohol problems, Delcomyn said.

Hope House is one of 11 grant recipients for 2009 from the Realtor Foundation, which gave a record \$90,000 in grants. Money was raised at events like an annual golf outing.

Established in 1984, Realtor Foundation works with other organizations to address homelessness across central Indiana. This year, the foundation exceeded its goal in raising more than \$110,000, according to the group's Web site.

"The changes in the economy are affecting everyone, but they're especially taking a toll on these non-profit organizations that already operate on a tight budget," Roger Lundy, 2008 president of the Realtor Foundation, said in a news release when the grants were announced. "We're happy to be able to continue our support of these deserving service providers and help them sustain the good work they're doing in the community."