

Group raising money for van

The Path needs new vehicle

CRISTY LOFTIS
cloftis@chronicleonline.com
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It's not about simply providing a place for people to sleep at The Path of Citrus County.

The faith-based homeless shelter in Beverly Hills tries to help people get back on their feet. To do that, Path clients need to get to probation hearings, school, work, doctor appointments and church.

That's where The Path's vans come in.

"They're the glue that keeps those homes together," Path executive director DuWayne Sipper said.

He said one major reason many people become homeless is because they have a lack of transportation.

The problem is the vans donated to the shelter several years ago creep, groan and are basically on their last legs, Sipper said.

"Without

having that transportation, we're dead in the water," Sipper said.

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DuWayne Sipper
executive director about the need for a new vehicle.

He's hoping community members will send money to the Path so the organization may purchase a new van. Already, they've raised about \$1,700.

Lisa Ralston, who is currently staying at the Path, said having reliable transportation is essential.

"We pray that we have a way to get to work each day," Ralston said.

"Or if you get to work, you wonder how you're going to get home," fellow Path client Michele Benedict said.

Ralston said that while the county has a bus system, it doesn't run early in the morning, or Saturdays. If you're supposed to be at work by 7 a.m., you have to rely on the generosity of friends with cars.

"Transportation is a big deal to get back on your feet," Ralston said.

There have been times when Path vans have broken down and they couldn't make it to church. With so many people needing Path vans to take them to so many places, reliability is a major factor.

"We just don't have anything reliable," Benedict said. She's taking classes in Inverness to become a certified nurse's assistant. "The vans are in bad shape. They're not going to last much longer."

Sipper said anyone wishing to donate may send money to The Path, P.O. Box 3024, Inverness, FL 34451.

For more information, call Sipper at 527-6500.

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