



### In and Around Missoula with the Homeless

One of the advocates from the Housing Advocate Network (HAN)--a Missoula Interfaith Collaborative ministry that pairs up community volunteer mentors and homeless people—told this story:

A 60-year-old mother, Sarah, and her developmentally disabled, 30-year-old son, Jim, live in their car in a campground close to Thompson Falls. Her family won't help them because Jim is so hard to be around, and she can't qualify for state aid or the YWCA's Emergency Housing program because he is an adult, even though he is as dependent on his mother as any child.

Recently they drove to Missoula to try to win custody of Jim's 2 year old daughter, also developmentally disabled, and their car was rear-ended. Sarah took her savings and went to the Aspen Motel, and then returned to the campground hitchhiking, as her car no longer worked.

Since they live without electricity, they had been driving to a nearby restaurant, to give her an oxygen-machine treatment, but now, without a vehicle, they can't do that. And as a result of having no mailing address, she didn't receive updates and instructions from Social Security Disability and thereby lost it. She told her HAN mentor recently that she didn't think she had long to live.

This advocate is currently helping Sarah try to get housing, as well as support for Jim.

*This story was collected by members of the Advocacy for Housing Subcommittee. Look for other stories and information related to the lack of housing in Missoula, coming this fall at Holy Spirit.*

**Pass it On: please share this House Story with others in your life.**