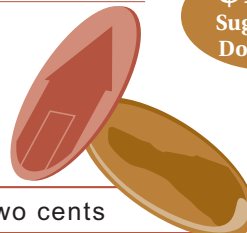


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Street Sense



Where the Washington area's poor and homeless earn and give their two cents

April 16, 2008 – April 29, 2008 • Volume 5, Issue 12

www.streetsense.org

VENDOR VOICES

Drug Abuse Cuts Across Class and Race

By Jeffery McNeil



Many people who have jobs or places to live look down on the homeless drug addict and blame him or her for all that is wrong with society. One common view is that the homeless are begging and scheming for money to fuel their addictions. However,

it is important to remember that drugs cut across the fabric of America.

There are many reasons for addictions. Sometimes they are medical or sometimes come about from learned behaviors.

My first discovery of drugs began with the behavior of one of my relatives whom I loved dearly. He served in Vietnam and as a result of the trauma he experienced during that war, he became a habitual drug user.

I had many relatives who were addicts and I witnessed some of the scandalous behavior their drug use caused. Even though some were typical troubled addicts, others seemed to maintain some normalcy.

We never went hungry or lived out on the street. In fact, many of my drug-abusing relatives were active in community gatherings and they instilled traditional values in us even if they didn't live up to them themselves.

From my experiences as a child, I developed my own way of dealing with addicts. I stayed at a distance and never got emotionally involved with them.

Those up-close experiences with addiction still hurt to this day. Addiction broke up my family. My brother was addicted to crack and my father had a relationship with a heroin user. I have not had any contact with them in years because of this.

Writing this editorial is very emotional because I know what addictions can do: how they destroy lives. Constant drug use will lead to losing everything.

I was an alcoholic, sex addict and had gambling addictions. I don't blame anyone for the choices I made, but I do believe that your relatives and the adults that surround you as

See **Drugs**, page 13

Shuttered Shelters, High Ambition: Fenty's Proposed \$19.2M Housing Plan Leaves Some Advocates Cold

By Brittany Aubin

The District of Columbia has proposed an initiative that it hopes will transform its current system of homeless care, switching from an approach that focuses on immediate shelter needs to a supportive housing model that manages the causes of homelessness, the director of the Department of Human Services, Clarence Carter, announced earlier this month.

But Mayor Adrian Fenty's proposed \$19.2 million housing plan, which must still be approved by the City Council, will also sound the death knell for the controversial 300-bed Franklin School shelter on 13th and K streets, continuing a trend that began with the closure of D.C. Village, the only city shelter for homeless families, last fall.

As a result, concerns and criticism are circulating among the homeless and their advocates. Many fear a loss of at least 50% of shelter capacity downtown that will accompany the plan's rollout.

Some of the conflict rests in the scale of the mayor's proposed changes. "The city is being asked to slow down," said City Administrator Dan Tangherlino.

City officials say their housing model, based in part on programs in New York and San Francisco, will make significant strides in achieving Mayor Adrian Fenty's long-term goals and reduce chronic homelessness by 23%.

Permanent supportive housing, also known as Housing First, places the homeless into apartments and then provides case management and services like job training, substance abuse treatment and financial planning. It is widely viewed as an effective remedy for reducing homelessness. The city plans to award 400 vouchers for permanent supportive housing to the chronically homeless in the city over the next six months.



Fenty, D.C. housing chief Michael Kelly (middle) and D.C. Councilmember Jim Graham (Ward 1)

But the city's corresponding cuts to shelter services may be pre-emptive and come too soon, before its permanent supportive housing plan has actually decreased the number of homeless people who need emergency shelter beds, said one homeless advocate.

Other advocates, such as Marcy Dunlap with the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless, worry that the city is moving forward without client input.

Although public hearings are supposed to be scheduled during a 45-day public comment period, there is little indication of how the city will incorporate that information into the final policy, Dunlap said. The comment period began April 2 with the plan's official

See **Fenty**, page 4

Thumbs Up or Thumbs Down? Reactions to the Mayor's Plan

• **Thumbs up.** "The ultimate goal should not be shelter but housing."
– Michael Ferrell, executive director of the D. C. Coalition for the Homeless.

• **Thumbs up.** "Often you have to take projects like this to scale, to test the assumptions of the successes and evaluate where there can be changes."
– Michael Kelly, executive director of the D.C. Housing Authority.

• **No thumbs yet.** "It's the things we don't know that cause anxiety."
– Scott McNeilly, staff attorney at the Washington Legal Clinic for the Homeless and a representative on the D.C. Interagency Council on Homelessness.

• **Thumbs down.** "I am very disappointed with the lack of commitment to downtown shelter that this move indicates, despite the Mayor's repeated pledges to the contrary. While the flyers sent out to the residents promise 400 units of housing to be made available this year, there will be no preference shown toward the Franklin residents, and since there are many thousands of homeless men, women, and children in the District, the odds of housing even the current crop of residents, let alone those who only stay there in the winter, or those who will become homeless in the interim, is nil."
– David Pirtle, former Franklin shelter resident and co-chair of Fenty's 2006 Homeless Services e-Transition team.

Inside This Issue

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RESTAURANT REVIEW Old Ebbitt Grill

Martin Walker comes away underwhelmed by his jambalaya, page 10

PHOTOGRAPHY The Other Side of D.C.

Dan Wilkinson explores the hidden parts of the city, center spread

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Our Mission

Street Sense aims to serve as a vehicle for elevating voices and public debate on issues relating to poverty while also creating economic opportunities for people who are experiencing homelessness in our community.

Our Editorial Policy

Editorials and features in Street Sense reflect the perspectives of the authors. We invite the submission of news, opinion, fiction and poetry, hoping to create a means in which a multitude of perspectives on poverty and homelessness can find expression. Street Sense reserves the right to edit any material.

The Story of Street Sense

Street Sense began in August 2003 after two volunteers, Laura Thompson Osuri and Ted Henson, approached the National Coalition for the Homeless on separate occasions about starting a street newspaper in Washington, D.C.

A street paper is defined as a newspaper about poverty, homelessness and other social issues that provides an income to the homeless individuals who sell it. About 25 street papers operate in the United States and Canada in places like Seattle, Chicago, Montreal and Boston, and dozens more exist throughout the world.

After bringing together a core of dedicated volunteers and vendors, Street Sense came out with its first issue in November 2003, printing 5,000 copies. For the next three years the paper published consistently on a monthly basis and greatly expanded its circulation and vendor network.

For the first year, Street Sense operated as a project of the National Coalition for the Homeless, but in October 2004, the organization incorporated and moved into its own office space. In March 2005, Street Sense received 501(c)3 status, becoming an independent nonprofit organization.

In October 2005, Street Sense formed a board of directors, and in November, the organization hired its first employee, a full-time executive director.

A year later, in November 2006, the organization hired its first vendor coordinator.

In February 2007, the paper started publishing twice a month as the network of vendors expanded to more than 50 homeless men and women. To support the increased production, Street Sense brought on its first full-time editor in chief in April 2007.

We are proud members of:



North American Street Newspaper Association



International Network of Street Papers

Street Sense Vendor Code of Conduct

1. Street Sense will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations for Street Sense by any other means.
2. I will only purchase the paper from Street Sense staff and will not sell papers to other vendors (outside of the office volunteers).
3. I agree to treat all others – customers, staff, other vendors – respectfully, and I will not “hard sell,” threaten or pressure customers.
4. I agree to stay off private property when selling Street Sense.
5. I understand that I am not a legal employee of Street Sense but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
6. I agree to sell no additional goods or products when selling the paper.
7. I will not sell Street Sense under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
8. There are no territories among vendors. I will respect the space of other vendors, particularly the space of vendors who have been at a spot longer.
9. I understand that my badge is the property of Street Sense and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers and display my badge when selling papers.
10. I understand that Street Sense strives to be a paper that covers homelessness and poverty issues while providing a source of income for the homeless. I will try to help in this effort and spread the word.

WANNA HELP?

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or have a great article or feature idea, please contact Koki Smith at 202-347-2006 or e-mail editor@streetsense.org

If you are interested in becoming a vendor, contact Rita Brunson at the same number or come to a vendor training session on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 2 p.m. at our office (1317 G Street, NW – near Metro Center).

Where your dollar goes...



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Street Sense would like to thank Kelly and Scott Hester for donating the turkey that Rita Brunson prepared for the last vendor meeting.

For a complete list of donors, please see page 5.

Thank You!

SERVICE PROFILE

Award-Winning Housing Advocate Headed to D.C.

By Ted Henson

A pioneer and leading advocate for the creation of supportive housing will speak at Foundry United Methodist Church in Washington, D.C., on April 27.

Rosanne Haggerty is the founder and president of Common Ground, a New York City-based nonprofit dedicated to the creation of affordable housing. Started in 1991 when it acquired the Times Square Hotel in midtown Manhattan, Common Ground offers more than shelter.

Haggerty is at the forefront of a nationwide movement known as “supportive housing,” which proponents describe as affordable, permanent housing that offers on-site social services such as mental-health and substance-abuse counseling, job training and placement, and life-skills classes.

Many religious leaders and homeless advocates in D.C. have been calling for more supportive and affordable housing here, and Mayor Adrian Fenty recently proposed a new permanent supportive housing initiative to be overseen by a city department.

The idea to bring Haggerty – who has won the World Habitat Award from the United Nations and a MacArthur Fellowship – to Washington, D.C. came after a delegation of church members, homeless advocates and city officials visited Common Ground last year.

The group liked what it saw. “Our involvement in this issue, as a church, comes from the fact that we have people sleeping on our steps and, as a church, we feel that’s not how it should be,” said Jana Meyer, minister of missions at Foundry UMC.



Rosanne Haggerty of Common Ground, who won a MacArthur “genius” grant for her work on homelessness, will speak in D.C. on April 27.

Many members of the Washington Interfaith Network, or WIN, provide hospitality to homeless men and women, but do not get to the core of problem, Meyer said.

She said the visit to Common Ground proved that it is possible to provide good-quality, affordable housing in a way that is economically feasible.

The delegation toured Common Ground’s

Common Ground’s flagship housing program in New York reduced homelessness around Times Square by 87%.

flagship institution, the Times Square, which offers housing to 652 low-income and formerly homeless individuals. It is the largest permanent supportive housing project in the nation.

Common Ground’s Street to Home program “reduced street homelessness by 87% in the 20-block Times Square neighborhood, and by 43% in the surrounding 230 blocks of West Midtown,” according to the organization’s Web site. The nonprofit has been able to make these achievements at a lower cost per night than city shelters, prisons or hospitals.

Common Ground’s success has merited further growth.

The organization has five other buildings in Manhattan and one in Connecticut that focus on providing housing for low-income working professionals, people living with HIV/AIDS, and young adults transitioning out of foster care. The nonprofit has ambitious plans for the future, with seven buildings under construction.

The new developments include the Lee, which will dedicate 54 units to young adults who are aging out of foster care and at risk of homelessness. The Lee, which will provide

housing for 263 tenants, is unique because it is New York City’s first supportive housing building to earn the U.S. Green Building Council’s LEED Silver certification. The building’s green design will boast high-efficiency lighting, individual temperature control, and a green roof.

Washington, D.C., is also moving forward with new plans for supportive housing – a concept long advocated by members of the Washington Interfaith Network.

Fenty announced this month a proposal to create a Housing First Fund and a permanent supportive housing initiative to be administered by the city’s Department of Human Services. Under Fenty’s plan, 400 homeless people would be housed in six months. In addition, Fenty wants to consolidate existing emergency shelter facilities, which would result in the closure of the Franklin School Shelter downtown. *See related story on page 1.*

Last July, Fenty announced to the Washington Interfaith Network that his administration would allocate \$117 million to protect and create affordable housing.

WIN has actively engaged with the mayor since he has taken office to ensure the creation of 2,500 units of permanent supportive housing.

WIN is holding “an action” with city council members on April 28 in hopes of securing commitments to the network’s Neighborhoods First agenda, which includes funding for affordable housing and permanent supportive housing, Meyer said. Included in that funding is the \$19 million for the Housing First Fund.

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 You can also donate online at www.streetsense.org

I will donate:

\$50 for two vendor awards each month
 \$70 for one restaurant review
 \$100 for postage each month
 \$200 for the vests of 15 new vendors
 \$500 for monthly rent and insurance
 \$1,200 for the printing of one issue
 Another amount of \$ _____
 Another amount of \$ _____ for vendor: _____

Additional items that Street Sense needs:

- * Messenger and tote bags and backpacks for vendors
- * Bottled water to hand out to vendors
- * Food for vendor meetings
- * Office chairs
- * Laptop computers with at least Windows 2000 and 10 GB of storage space

Please call 202-347-2006 or send an e-mail to info@streetsense.org if you have any of these items to donate.

Fenty, from page 1

vouchers from an already strapped D.C. Housing Authority. As of January 2008, the agency had about 57,000 people on a waiting list for housing assistance. It's unclear which city agency will provide the remaining 50 vouchers for the 400 housing units.

Chet Grey, the director of homeless services for the Downtown Business Improvement District, is not optimistic about the closure of Franklin, the last low-barrier shelter for men downtown, or in the city's ability to house 400 people over the course of six months.

Grey highlighted the need for a low-barrier emergency shelter in the downtown area, adding that the BID has advocated a minimum of 100 beds in the downtown and 100 in the Georgetown area. "Downtown," as defined by the improvement district, encompasses a 140-block rough triangle between Massachusetts Avenue and the National Mall, with Louisiana Avenue and the White House on either end.

"The reality is it's a daunting task," Grey said. "It is going to present a serious problem downtown."

Moreover, new people continue to come into the system either through migration or entry into homelessness.

"Where are they going to go?" Grey asked.

Much of the proposal announced by Fenty was developed with support from the Corporation for Supportive Housing, an advocacy group that helps communities provide permanent housing with services to end homelessness.

The \$19.2-million proposal plans to meet the goals of former Mayor Anthony William's original 10-year Homeless No More plan,



This Georgia Avenue lot, procured by the city through a land swap with Central Union Mission, will be turned into mixed-use housing.

adopted in December 2004 to eliminate homelessness, over the next seven years. The original goal of the Homeless No More plan was to provide 6,000 units of affordable housing, including 2,500 units of permanent supportive housing, by 2014.

Fenty's proposed permanent supportive housing plan will begin to chip away at the 2,500 units of supportive housing with the same target year of 2014.

This allocation of housing will begin with an estimated 400 homeless individuals, who will be awarded housing vouchers in the next six months. An additional 480 units of supportive housing will be generated in 2009, said Laura Zeilinger, special assistant to the

City Administrator.

The apartments will be constructed, renovated or leased and 80 will be three-bedroom family units, according to the report submitted by the Corporation for Supportive Housing.

While early rumors indicated that this year's 400 housing vouchers would be allocated to current Franklin residents, the recipients will actually be selected from all of the city's homeless. The city has contracted Common Ground, a New York-based nonprofit, to help identify the most vulnerable in the system.

Common Ground uses a "vulnerability index" that accounts for diseases, disabilities

With Franklin shutting its doors at the onset of cold weather, the city may face additional challenges this winter. In the past, Franklin has been seen as a go-to spot for an overtaxed shelter system, the number of beds ballooning to 300 to meet the needs of the city's homeless.

BRITTANY AUBIN/STREET SENSE

and other physical and mental health conditions when prioritizing the homeless who will be moved into housing, said the organization's director of innovations Becky Kanis during a presentation to the Interagency Council on Homelessness last Thursday.

Unlike in New York, where the index was used to move street homeless into housing, the index for the District will be modified for use with populations already in the shelter system, said Clarence Carter, director of the Department of Human Services. Specifically, the plan will take special note of the length of time residents spend in shelter.

As defined, the index will not be used for addressing the number of homeless who live on the street instead of in shelters, Carter said. The Homeless No More plan identified 315 people who lived on the street in the city in January 2004, and estimated that number rose to 500 during warmer seasons.

Space in shelters for these unsheltered homeless will be opened up by removing the 400 chronic shelter residents and placing them into the permanent supportive housing structure, according to city officials.

Although some see the closure of the dilapidated Franklin shelter, with its structural deficiencies and inhumane conditions, as a victory, others echo the concerns of the Downtown BID's Chet Grey.

With Franklin shutting its doors at the onset of cold weather, the city may face additional challenges this winter, said one advocate. In the past, Franklin has been seen as a go-to spot for an overtaxed shelter system, the number of beds ballooning to 300 to meet the needs of the city's homeless.

Franklin's closure will halve the number of downtown emergency shelter beds – and that's an optimistic estimate.

The mayor's proposed plan will eliminate even more emergency beds for men by turning the Harriet Tubman women's shelter, currently located in the cafeteria of the former D.C. General Hospital, into a 24-hour facility and moving it to Building 9 of the hospital grounds. Building 9 has served as a hypothermia center for men in the winter months.

The city plans to meet downtown shelter needs through the 125-bed Gales School Shelter, which will be owned and operated by the faith-based nonprofit Central Union

What About Gales Shelter?

Central Union Mission's announcement that it will move to a resurrected Gales shelter near Union Station in 2010 effectively marks the end of the faith-based nonprofit's controversial plan to relocate its headquarters to the 3500 block of Georgia Avenue.

The mission's original plans to move to Georgia Avenue after its lease at 14th and R streets, NW, expired next year had met with strong opposition from Ward 1 residents. Some ward residents had protested loudly that the planned four-story, 58,000 square-foot building, which was to include the ministry's administrative offices, a chapel, public café, men's shelter and a free community medical and dental clinic, would hurt the area's nascent revitalization efforts. Read our Aug. 1, 2007 story of the controversy at <http://www.streetssense.org/archives/2007/080107issue.pdf> (page 5).

As recently as last August, the mission planned to begin construction on the Georgia Avenue site in the spring of 2008 and had revised building plans in response to community protests.

Now, however, it seems the Ward 1 protesters have gotten their way.

As part of its agreement with the city, Central Union Mission is receiving the Gales building in direct exchange for the lot on

Georgia Avenue, with the city paying part of the renovation costs for the run-down Gales building. Central Union Mission plans to make the building into a 125-bed men's shelter as well as its administrative headquarters.

Ward 1 Councilmember Jim Graham, a vocal opponent of the proposed Georgia Avenue men's shelter, helped secure the Gales shelter building for the mission, said David Treadwell, the executive director of Central Union Mission.

Central Union had expressed interest in moving to other locations closer to the downtown core, and Graham contacted the city administrator to locate a suitable property, Treadwell said.

The two parties are now working out a contract for the property exchange and renovations. The city's contribution will be "well under half of the cost of the project," Treadwell said. He expects to raise funds to meet the remainder of the costs.

The District plans to transform the Georgia Avenue lot into mixed-income apartments, ranging from supportive low-income to market-rate, Mayor Adrian Fenty announced earlier this month. The new building should provide at least 50 new units of permanent supportive housing.

Ward 1 Councilmember Jim Graham celebrated the decision as a victory for the grassroots. "It is one thing to say 'no.' It is quite another to say 'yes' to something positive," Graham said.

Jean Long, a 65-year-old lifelong resident of the Georgia Avenue neighborhood, wondered how many units would truly go to homeless and low-income citizens.

"Everything that gets built in this neighborhood is basically for those that can afford \$200,000 to 300,000," said Long, who inherited her home from her parents. "I don't see anything that is truly geared to the poor."

Meanwhile, Central Union Mission is not attempting to replicate the mission of Franklin shelter through the reopening of Gales, Treadwell said. Franklin, a low-barrier shelter owned by the city and operated by Catholic Charities, is slated to close by Oct. 1 this year.

When Gales shelter opens sometime in 2010, it will most likely continue to serve the constituency of Central Union's 14th and R streets location after that location's lease expires in 2009.

"It's an unfair picture that Gales is going to directly replace Franklin," Treadwell said.

– Brittany Aubin

See Fenty, page 5

Fenty, from page 4

Mission.
The Gales shelter, located near Union Station, operated as a city facility before closing in April 2003. When Gales re-opens, it will be under Central Union Mission management, said David Treadwell, the executive director of Central Union Mission.

The Gales building, however, requires substantial restoration work that will probably not be completed until early 2010, Treadwell said. The 300-bed Franklin shelter, by contrast, is scheduled to close by Oct. 1 this year.

In a letter distributed to Franklin residents on April 4, Carter of the Department of Human Services indicated that those residents who do not receive housing by Franklin's final night will be connected to other District shelters.

"After Franklin School shelter closes, the Gales School, located at 65 Massachusetts Avenue, will open as an emergency shelter for men," the letter continues. It does not mention that the Gales shelter will not begin providing service until more than a year after Franklin closes, if not longer.

During two closed-door sessions with Franklin residents last week, Carter continued to discuss next steps. Carter emphasized that Franklin residents would not be guaranteed housing, according to Eric Sheptock, a shelter resident and a member of the grassroots group Until We're Home, started by Franklin residents in 2006 to maintain the shelter. Street Sense was denied access to the meeting between Franklin residents and Carter.

Sheptock estimates that although Franklin holds only a little over 300 men at one time, the turnover means that the actual of number of shelter users could peak at 1,000 annually. Those who don't secure a spot in limited new units will be transferred to other emergency beds at different locations, he said.

"It's going to be a lateral move," Sheptock said. "You're not moving up necessarily. You're just moving to another shelter." See Sheptock's editorial on Franklin's planned closure on page 12.

During Fenty's run for mayor two years ago, Fenty the candidate told Street Sense that the city "has made a mistake by closing too many downtown shelters and replacing them with shelters that are harder to access and farther away from services and jobs."

Fenty stated then that he would press the Williams administration to keep Franklin online until the Gales Shelter reopened and "there are enough beds in the downtown area."

Even when it does open, Central Union Mission's Gales shelter will not serve as a true low-barrier shelter, that is, a shelter that seeks to eliminate all obstacles to someone coming in off the street, said Chet Grey.

The Christian-based structure of Central Union Mission might make Gales shelter less accessible to some homeless residents, said the Washington Legal Clinic's Scott McNeilly, as some residents may not agree with the religious messages and mission of the organization.

Central Union Mission is working to reduce barriers to the men who will access the Gales shelter, the mission's Treadwell said. Many of Central Union's current residents at its 14th and R streets shelter enjoy optional spiritual activities, he said, but the organization does want to increase flexibility at the Gales shelter.

"We don't want a single bed to be empty on any given night," Treadwell said.

As a private provider, Central Union Mission will not be governed by the Homeless Services Reform Act, which guarantees the rights of the homeless in city shelters, said one professional homeless advocate, who prefers to remain anonymous.

And when Franklin closes, the city will no longer directly control any shelter downtown, the advocate said.

Street Sense thanks the following donors for their generous support:

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**Adams Morgan
Advisory Neighborhood Commission (1C)
Business and Committee Meeting Information**

Monthly ANC 1C Business Meeting

Meets 1st Wednesday of each month
Next Meeting: May 7 at 7 p.m.
Mary's Center (The Pink Building)
2355 Ontario Road, NW

ANC 1C Contact List

email: anc1c@yahoogroups.com
web: www.anc1c.org
phone: 202-332-2630
mail: ANC 1C
PO Box 21009
Washington, DC 20009



ANC 1C Committee Meetings

ABC and Public Safety

Meets 2nd Monday each month
Next Meeting: May 12
Kalorama Park Recreation Center
Columbia Rd. and Belmont Rd., NW
(concurrent with PSA 303 meeting)

Planning, Zoning, and Transportation

Meets 2nd Wednesday each month
Next Meeting: May 14
3rd District Police Station
17th St and V St., NW (Snyder Room)

Public Services

Meets 4th Wednesday each month
Next Meeting: April 23
Kalorama Park Recreation Center
Columbia Rd. and Belmont Rd., NW

Street Politics

By
David S. Hammond



The 1968 Riots: "It Felt Like Our Whole Community Had Burned Down"

A few years ago, at a Street Sense fundraiser at the Black Cat nightclub on 14th Street, NW, vendor Edna Williams and I were dazzled by the nightlife and the bright lights. We could remember the years after 1968 when the area was a ghost town, populated only by streetwalkers. To us, a vibrant downtown was not only unrecognizable – it was almost unimaginable.

The assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. 40 years ago brought sorrow and pain to Washingtonians. The riot corridors were haunted for decades by boarded-up storefronts, gutted by fire and looting.

For Washingtonians, that meant lost opportunities and a poorer quality of life. Now a new era of rebuilding and renewal is closing a strange chapter in our history.

When Dr. King was killed, said Street Sense vendor Francine Triplett, she was angry. But the rioting also made her sad.

"That was a shame because people work hard for their stuff," she said, a shame "like today, when they hijack people's cars." After the riots, with retail businesses gone, "it was like they just didn't care anymore."

Triplett was playing baseball at a recreation center, "and the next thing I know, I see Army men. To get home to Southwest, we had to walk across South Capitol Street, and we got caught in the tear gas," she said. "We saw people stealing stuff out of the dry cleaners, and when I got home, my mom said, 'Don't go out.' So we stayed in watching TV."

King's death, and the deaths of Jack and Bobby Kennedy, hit Triplett hard. "It seemed like everyone who was for helping blacks got killed," she said. For years afterward, she didn't vote.

Today, Triplett votes. She is happy to see renewal in places like H Street, N.E., where the shopping and entertainment, just a short bus ride from her old neighborhood, were burned out in 1968. Although it means change in her hometown, and the end of the era in which she grew up, she said, "I'm glad they've got it back in order."

"Where Could You Go to the Store? Where Could You Shop?"

Street Sense vendor L. Morrow also remembers 1968 as a difficult year. "I was saddened by Dr. King's death because he was trying to do something positive for all human beings," he said.

"We were on the wharf by the waterfront with a bunch of friends," Morrow said, "and some people came by and said King had gotten assassinated. Later we saw news of the riots in different parts of the country. We never thought it would happen in Washington, D.C., but it did."

And after the riots, he said, "I felt ashamed, hurt, to see our city. I think Martin Luther King would have been shocked, because ... everything he'd worked for went up in smoke."

And in the following decades, "It felt like our whole community had burned down. Where could you go to the store? Where could you shop? And it remained that way, frozen in time."

Change comes at a price, Morrow said. "For a long time, it was only the subway that brought change, but now it's like a boom town. That land is worth something and rents are going up."

The renewal also highlights what has been lost. "My friends and I thought it was strange that they couldn't work on it then," he said. "And now 20, 30, 40 years later, they're gonna fix it up. Why couldn't they fix it up then?"

But, Morrow said, "If Dr. King were alive today, he would be proud of America, because a black man and a woman are running for president. That's equal rights!"

"If You Want to Have a Voice in Society ..."

Vendor Patty Smith is volunteering for the re-election campaign of D.C. Council member Kwame Brown (D-At Large). Smith says she knows Brown as "a down-to-earth person who can talk to anyone. And he has a 'can-do' attitude." So she has been helping out around campaign headquarters.

Why does she do this? "If you want to have a voice in society, you shouldn't just let a Council member decide how your life will be run. My mother worked in a steel mill in Pittsburgh, and she was always involved in things like the NAACP. So I'm just following her example," Smith said.

What's on your mind? E-mail StreetPoliticsDC@aol.com.

ON THE HILL

The Foreclosure Prevention Act

By Street Sense staff

For the past few months, the only topic in the news seems to have been the deteriorating economy. We have recently experienced failing banks, inflation and rising unemployment. A projected 28 million Americans will rely on food stamps this year just to feed themselves and their families, according to the Congressional Budget Office.

Although many factors may have contributed to the current economic situation, experts point directly to a failure in the housing and mortgage market as the catalyst of the crisis.

In the past months, we have learned that hundreds of thousands of people, many without good credit or the income to support it, were granted "adjustable rate mortgages," also known as predatory loans. They were offered a very low "teaser" or introductory interest rate, which later "adjusted" to a much higher rate that they could not afford to pay. After defaulting on payments, many people across the country have been forced out of their homes.

The rash of foreclosures is a serious concern for many groups that focus on homelessness and related issues. According to its Web site, the National Coalition for the Homeless "is deeply concerned about the subprime and foreclosure crisis and its potential to increase homelessness in our communities."

Encouraged by constituents and groups like the National Coalition for the Homeless, Congress has proposed legislation known as the Foreclosure

Prevention Act of 2008 (H.R. 3221), to both alleviate the current situation and prevent such a crisis from reoccurring.

The first and main purpose of this legislation is to provide a safety net for Americans who have lost their home or are at risk to lose their home after defaulting on mortgage payments. To assist these homeowners, lawmakers suggest offering communities with high foreclosure rates funds to purchase foreclosed properties for rehabilitation, rent or resale. The bill would also aim to expand refinancing opportunities and amend the bankruptcy code to allow lenders to modify or refinance mortgages.

Another aspect of the safety net would provide homeowners with access to financial counselors. The legislation may also provide tax relief for homeowners, homebuyers and homebuilders to help the housing market recover from the current crisis. Finally, lawmakers would like to improve loan disclosure language to make it more transparent so people better understand the terms of their agreement.

The Foreclosure Prevention Act will attempt to avert a similar housing crisis in the future by expanding and enhancing the Federal Housing Administration, which offers safe mortgages with no hidden clauses to lower-income Americans. With this option, lawmakers hope that homebuyers will no longer be forced into predatory loans.

Supporters of the legislation hope it will pass both the Senate and the House and be signed into law by the president this spring.

THE FORECLOSURE PREVENTION ACT OF 2008

Provisions of the Foreclosure Prevention Act of 2008 (H.R. 3221)

1. Increase pre-foreclosure counseling funds
2. Provide an additional \$10 billion of tax-exempt private activity bond authority and allow housing finance agencies to issue bonds for refinancings
3. Change the Bankruptcy Code to allow a judge to modify the mortgage of a debtor
4. Provide \$4 billion in funding for communities to purchase and redevelop foreclosed-upon properties
5. Simplify disclosure on mortgages documents

For more information, visit <http://democrats.senate.gov>

Mental Health Reforms in Virginia Make Little Headway

By Julia Linden
Capital News Service (VCU)

RICHMOND – With the aftershocks of the April 16, 2007, Virginia Tech shootings still reverberating, mental health advocates had high hopes at the start of the 2008 legislative session for dramatic improvements in Virginia's mental health laws.

But when the General Assembly adjourned last month, advocates like Hanover County resident Kathy Harkey felt disappointed and angry. They say legislators failed to remove a big obstacle to getting help for the mentally ill in Virginia.

"They need a whole new vehicle, and they just put some tires on the junker," said Jon Stanley, deputy director of the Treatment Advocacy Center, a national nonprofit group dedicated to "eliminating barriers to the timely and effective treatment of severe mental illnesses."

Under current Virginia law, one barrier has been this: A person must be deemed an immediate or "imminent" danger to himself or herself or others in order to be involuntarily committed to a mental health treatment program.

Last week, Gov. Tim Kaine signed into law House Bill 559, which will lower the criteria for someone to be involuntarily sent into treatment. Beginning July 1, treatment can be ordered if the person has a mental illness and

there exists a "substantial likelihood" that in the near future, the person will:

"Cause serious physical harm to himself or others as evidenced by recent behavior causing, attempting, or threatening harm"; or

"Suffer serious harm due to his lack of capacity to protect himself from harm or to provide for his basic human needs."

But Stanley says the difference between the new and old laws is minuscule. All legislators really did, he said, was "remove the catch phrase that reporters can use when something bad happens."

Two years ago, something horrible happened in Kathy Harkey's family: Her son, Joshua, committed suicide.

Since her son's death in January 2006, Harkey has devoted her life to changing Virginia's mental health system. As president of the National Alliance on Mental Illness of Central Virginia, she has approached legislators numerous times at public hearings and given speeches about Joshua, telling her story in hopes of sparking change.

"If I do cry, just bear with me," Harkey told a room full of Virginia Commonwealth University medical students during this year's legislative session. Harkey was pulling for one bill in particular – legislation she said could have saved her son's life.

Senate Bill 177 would have eliminated completely the "imminent danger" requirement for

involuntary treatment. It would have allowed a court to order a person to get outpatient or community treatment before they became an immediate physical threat to themselves or others.

S.B. 177 was based on a law passed in 1999 in New York, where a mentally ill person can be ordered into treatment based solely on the consent of a loved one or relative. That measure became known as "Kendra's Law," named after a woman who died from being pushed in front of a train by a person who was not being treated for a mental illness.

Many states have adopted their own versions of Kendra's Law. Virginia has not.

S.B. 177, sponsored by Sen. Henry L. Marsh, D-Richmond, got sidetracked in a committee and was carried over to 2009.

Marsh's bill was not the first attempt to address imminent danger terminology. In 2007, Sen. Ken Cuccinelli, R-Fairfax, proposed a similar bill that was carried over to this year's session. He said this is the third year in a row such bills have been introduced and eventually killed.

Although Cuccinelli supports a Kendra's Law approach, he says Virginia isn't ready. "I think the notion is that this is not a one-year effort. When you make such a dramatic change, you can't just snap your fingers."

S.B. 177 was among numerous bills inspired by the April 16 shootings at Virginia Tech, where a student with a history of mental illness killed 32 students and teachers before killing himself.

"Virginia Tech had a huge impact," Cuccinelli said. "It's unfortunate that this kind of tragedy is what it took to empower action, and in the sense of avoiding future tragedies and keeping families together, something should be done."

As Virginia prepared to mark the first anniversary of the Tech massacre, Gov. Kaine signed more than 30 bills and budget authorizations intended to improve the state's mental health system. But advocates such as Stanley and Harkey fear that those reforms aren't enough.

Harkey said her son Joshua couldn't get help because he "lost insight into his illness" and refused to acknowledge that he was sick. That made it impossible for him to receive medical care because he was not considered an "immediate danger" and refused to seek treatment on

About Mental Illness

- About one in five adults (age 18 and older) has a diagnosable mental disorder.

- Mental illnesses can affect people of any age, income, race, religion or culture. Mental illnesses affect both males and females.

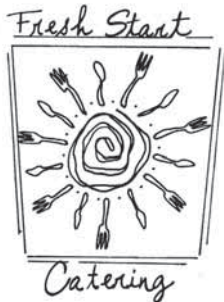
- Mental illnesses often appear for the first time during adolescence and young adulthood. While they can occur at any age, the young and old are especially vulnerable.

- Four of the 10 leading causes of disability (lost years of productive life) in the United States and other developed countries are mental disorders. They include major depression, bipolar disorders, schizophrenia and obsessive-compulsive disorder.

- With proper care and treatment, between 70% and 90% of people with mental illnesses experience a significant reduction of symptoms and better quality of life.

Source: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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his own accord, said Harkey, who lives in the town of Doswell.

"Joshua died exactly five and a half weeks after rescue workers entered our home and denied him medical care because he did not meet 'imminent danger' criteria," Harkey said.

Joshua killed himself at the age of 24.

According to the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, one of every five Americans has a mental illness. About two-thirds of these people suffer from a condition Joshua had – a symptom known as "anosognosia." This term describes a person who loses the ability to understand their illness and ultimately acknowledge they need help.

F O U N D R Y



Sunday, April 27
9:30 & 11:00 a.m. services

Rosanne Haggerty
President and Founder
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speaking on how

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The D.C. Streets

The Other Side

Photographer Dan Wilkinson set out to capture everyday occurrences around downtown D.C. – some hidden, some not so hidden and others just invisible to those who choose not to notice.

Watch for more photographs from Dan in our April 30 issue.



A panhandler jangles change in a brown bag outside the Farragut West Metro station. It was the sound of the coins that captured my imagination. He sounded so isolated, standing by himself at that corner.



A homeless woman hunkers down in the Farragut West Metro station around 1 a.m. on a cold April night.



The graffiti outside a homeless shelter on 2nd and D streets, NW, says it all – “No #1 Ho” and “Trick for Crack.” Some drug users will do anything to get their next high and lots of people know it.



A church sign announcing a service near Franklin Park. The service is titled “Agitated,” reflecting the state of mind of many of downtown’s homeless and drug users.



A man ducks into an alleyway behind the Franklin shelter and takes a hit of crack cocaine using a “rose,” or glass pipe. This photo was taken about 8:30 p.m.

Cold Feet: Drugs and the Riches Thereof

I'll make you feel you can fly,
next to a bird, high in the sky.

When you come down, I'll show you how to be,
a KING or QUEEN, how sweet to be.

I'll dress you in gold, silks and sats.
I'll feed you until you are just about fat.

And when you're done having all that fun,
you may not see the next day's sun.

If you don't get help from folks that care

I'll lay you out flat,
on a table BARE

with a tag hung on your big toe
which simply says
JOHN DOE.

— Mary Jane Owens

Unity

They come in many
shapes
shades
and moods;
some are
shy, demure;
others are
boisterous.

They come united
in two goals:
to learn, to serve.

I come from drizzly darkness
of a raw March night;
they welcome me
into their warmth.

They share their evening meal
and conversation with me—
warmth flows around the room.
Two days ago, I shared my life
with them, a fair exchange.

Now, they write in silence,
bright young faces
huddled over pens, as they
concentrate
and contemplate
clamorous kitchens and dining halls,
ringing voices of hunger and joy,
dark weary sleeping forms
huddled under blankets.

I write in silence, too,
united with them
for a sacred moment;
now and then,
I glance upward from my page
at their faces, so beautiful and fresh,
so unlike the worn and scarred faces
I see each day,
or the one I see in mirrors,
and I think
“this is joy, this is love, this is
unity!”
and I wait in silence
to hear the magic from their pens.

— David Harris

MY TURN AT THE TABLE *By Martin Walker*

An Underwhelming Experience

I recently had the pleasure of having lunch with the new Street Sense vendor manager, Rita Brunson. We went to Washington, D.C.'s oldest saloon, the Old Ebbitt Grill, which was established in 1856.

The building in which the Ebbitt Grill is located was originally a boarding house. Its most famous resident was the Civil War general and U.S. President Ulysses S. Grant. The boarding house also offered accommodation to Army and Navy officers, as well as to commissioned officers from other branches of the armed forces. This upscale restaurant, located less than a block from the White House, offers a rich history and an intimate atmosphere.

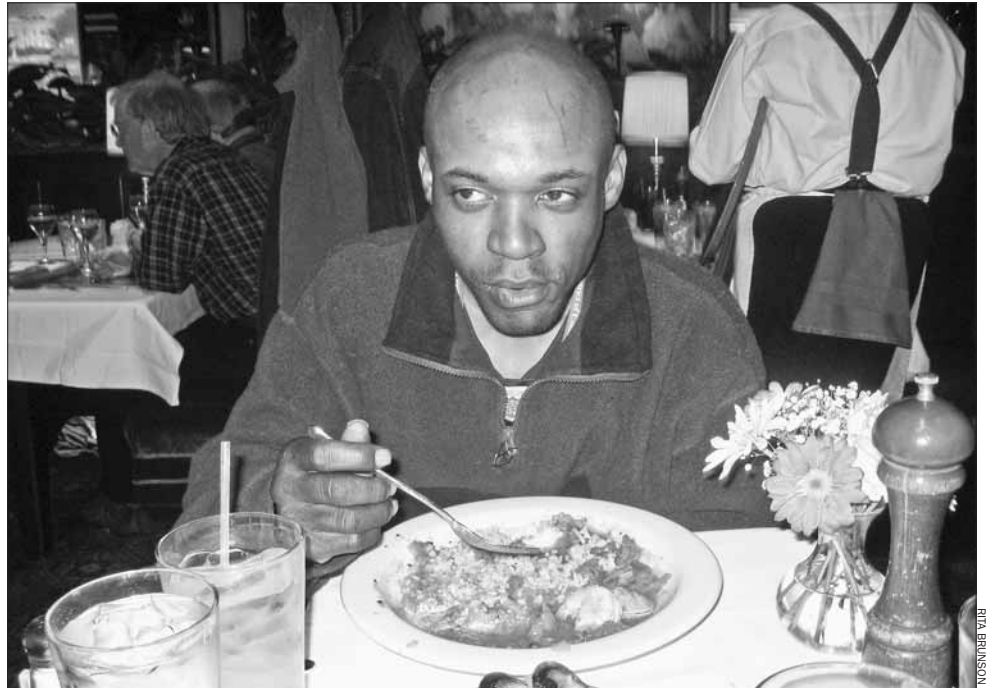
On one side, there's a private bar with its own entry separated from the restaurant. The bar is perfect for sitting down and having a drink while socializing and getting to know someone else without having to watch other people enjoying their meals.

There are often politicians and other high profile patrons having power lunches, brunches and dinners. Rita and I were seated at a quaint little table toward the rear of the restaurant. From our table we were able to see just about every important figure who entered the restaurant.

When we arrived around noon, many patrons were already there. After we were seated, a waitress came to take our orders, but we were still mulling over what we would like to eat and drink. Rita told me that she loves calamari. Being a gentleman, I offered to split a huge portion of calamari as an appetizer.

We also ordered our main courses. Rita ordered the calf liver and I ordered the seafood jambalaya, which had just about everything in it except barnacles. After we were finished with the appetizer, sitting amongst this crowd of politicians and government officials, we immediately began debating who would and should become our next president. Of course our opinions were different, but that didn't prevent us from having a friendly debate.

When the main course finally arrived, I was quite hungry and ready to eat my seafood jambalaya. It was served on a large plate of rice surrounded by just about every type of seafood imaginable and was smothered in what I believed to be a thick marinara sauce. I have never really been a fan of red



Despite the historic setting, Martin Walker's seafood jambalaya at the Old Ebbitt Grill just didn't cut it.

pasta sauces. Instead of the jambalaya, I should have ordered the crab cakes. Unfortunately, the pretty waitress was so cute and persuasive that she convinced me to order the jambalaya because, as she put it, it had all kinds of seafood in it. So regretfully, I decided to try it and, afterward, I really wish I had tried the crab cakes.

As for Rita, she stated that she'll never order grilled calf liver again; she'd rather have liver smothered in onions and gravy.

I give the Old Ebbitt Grill a fair rating. As it has been patronized by every president since Grant, the grill gets one thumb up. However, I encourage anyone who visits this historic restaurant not to expect too much. It just didn't do it for me.

You Don't Need ESP to Make the Most of Your Tax Refund

By Meg Newman



When we talk about ESP, we're not talking about Extra-Sensory Perception – we're talking about Economic Stimulus Payments, an extra chunk of cash that may be coming your way this tax season.

Beginning in May, the IRS will send Economic Stimulus Payment (ESP) checks to over 130 million households. Intended to spur a slowing economy, these payments represent many millions of dollars flowing into our communities.

So do you qualify for the check? Even if you do not think you need to file your taxes this year, you might be eligible for the ESP check. If you received more than \$3,000 from any of the following sources or a combination, you might be eligible to receive the ESP:

- **Wages.** You must have earned more than \$3,000 in 2007 to qualify this year for the stimulus, but if your earnings are too low from 2007, you could still qualify for a check when you file your 2008 taxes if you earn more money this year. Even if you earned less than \$3,000 and are ineligible for the ESP, you may want to file a tax return for 2007 in order to reclaim any taxes that were withheld from your pay check. It is NOT too late! You can do this after April 15, for up to three years.

- **Social Security Disability Payments.** Only if they come

from the Social Security Administration; SSI payments are not eligible.

- **Social Security Retirement Benefits.**
- **Veterans' Benefits.**
- **Railroad Pensions.**

The bad news: You must file a tax return to receive the ESP even if you would not normally need to file. The good news: It's not too late; you have until October to do it! And there is free help available. Those who have already filed need to do nothing more! You should receive your check after May 15. The IRS will accept ESP returns until October 15.

The ESP amount ranges from \$300 for those who receive Social Security or have a low tax liability to \$600 for workers with a higher tax liability. Families will receive \$300 additional dollars for each eligible child.

To help more people claim and keep the economic stimulus payment and any other tax benefits, the DC EITC Campaign and Community Tax Aid are hosting Super Stimulus Filing Days. On Saturday, April 19, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. eligible residents can come to the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Library (Room A-9 in the basement) for assistance filing a tax return.

These days are intended for people who are filing primarily to receive the ESP check. If you are not able to make it to MLK on April 19 or you work with a population likely to need assistance filing for the ESP, please contact info@dceitc.org or 202-419-1442 for information on other opportunities for assistance.

So what will you do with your refund? With messages com-

ing to us from all angles urging us to "buy new things" or "upgrade to a new model" there are scores of temptations to head to the mall with our tax checks in hand and make potentially unwise financial decisions.

Saving tip: Create a budget for your refund check. Set some aside for savings, another portion for debt, bills and critical purchases. Reserve just a small portion for a more frivolous or splurge item. We all have needs and wish lists, but creating a budget for your refund check before it arrives will help you avoid spending your money on items you later regret.

In honor of Financial Literacy Month in April, we challenge you to take a proactive step towards a brighter financial future. Your ESP check alone will not make or break the American economy, but it may have a significant impact on your financial well-being.

In addition to saving your refund and/or spending it carefully, consider joining DC Saves. This citywide coalition provides financial resources and information to help you reduce debt, increase savings, and build wealth. Tax refund time is the perfect opportunity for a free visit to a credit counselor or enrollment in a matched savings account. Membership in DC Saves is free. Visit www.dcsaves.org to sign up and learn more!

This regular financial column is presented by Capital Area Asset Builders. Send questions or feedback on this article to saving@caab.org. For more information about savings and Financial Literacy Month, visit www.dcsaves.org. For information about free tax filing, visit www.dceitc.org.

WANTED Street Sense Board Members

Street Sense is calling all qualified readers to consider joining the Street Sense board of directors. We are looking for people who have a passion for helping empower homeless individuals and who have innovative ideas to help our organization succeed.

All board members are unpaid and requirements include board meetings and work team meetings every other month, and about three to six hours of work outside the meetings each month.

We are looking for potential board members who are:

- Attorneys
- Accountants
- Journalists
- Marketing Specialists
- Members of the Small Business Community
- Leaders at Nonprofits Serving the Homeless

If you are interested, please send your resume and a cover letter explaining why you would be a great addition to the Street Sense board to board president Ted Henson at ted@streetsense.org.

Gregory's Great Game

Street Sense vendor Gregory Martin loves creating puzzles.

Simply find the following words in the grid below. The solution to the last puzzle is found below.

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| Practice | Pick |
| Private | Park |
| Pride | Pursue |
| People | Profit |
| Paper | Pleasure |
| Pencil | Pill |
| Pray | Paint |
| Pitch | Pleasure |
| Pens | Power |
| Paste | Panel |

P	L	E	A	S	U	R	E	P	R	S	P
A	R	P	R	P	R	O	F	I	T	T	L
N	P	A	O	E	C	I	T	C	A	R	P
L	R	E	W	O	P	R	P	A	N	E	L
H	C	T	I	P	W	A	R	E	N	E	E
P	R	O	R	L	P	O	P	C	N	T	A
E	N	I	L	E	E	B	I	L	L	S	S
U	G	I	R	P	K	L	C	P	O	E	E
S	P	P	Y	R	O	P	K	I	R	N	P
R	I	A	A	P	A	I	N	T	P	S	R
U	R	P	P	R	I	D	E	P	T	E	P
P	R	I	V	A	T	E	P	A	S	T	E

Looking for a past story or poem?

Check out the Street Sense online archives!
Visit www.streetsense.org/archives.jsp to read past issues
or use our internal search engine at www.streetsense.org

Gregory's Great Game: Solution to April 2 Puzzle

S	B	A	S	E	B	A	L	L	S	V	A
H	P	L	G	H	L	O	G	Y	T	L	F
R	A	I	N	S	O	R	A	P	R	I	D
O	C	G	G	U	S	D	C	V	E	M	O
E	F	O	N	M	H	B	H	E	E	Y	W
N	L	O	I	T	F	A	E	N	T	A	E
I	D	S	R	O	R	A	R	D	S	D	R
H	U	A	P	B	T	C	R	O	E	S	S
S	E	P	S	L	S	N	Y	R	N	L	P
N	A	O	S	R	E	W	O	H	S	O	I
U	B	L	O	S	S	O	M	S	E	O	N
S	V	E	M	F	H	T	R	U	O	F	G

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IN MY OPINION *By Eric Sheptock*

Back to Square One



Franklin School Shelter, the only low-barrier shelter for men downtown, and the place where I live, is scheduled to close. Again.

We residents saved the shelter once before,

when it was slated to close in March 2007. The new closing date is October 2008, so we held the city off for a year and a half!

I'm not completely sure what the collective will of the shelter residents is now, but as a homeless advocate I would like to present a few ideas, engage people in activities around this and other homeless concerns, and bring people together who otherwise might not meet.

Washington Inter-Faith Network (WIN), a major grassroots organizer in D.C., had a meeting on April 7 as part of its ongoing effort to work with Mayor Adrian Fenty on affordable housing issues.

WIN has involved the homeless community in a big way. I was able to speak with Mayor Fenty for several minutes at the meeting, and our conversation gave me some ideas about how we can make progress in dealing with various homeless issues.

I greeted the mayor, shook hands and wasted no time, saying, "So we're losing Franklin."

He responded with, "But you're gaining 400 units of permanent supportive housing."

Mayor Fenty seemed to have been under the impression that Franklin residents would receive the lion's share of those 400 additional units.

I told him that not all of those units were going to Franklin residents. Clarence Carter, head of the D.C. Department of Human Services (DHS), has said that those 400 units will be given to homeless people from all over D.C. I told the mayor that Franklin residents would not be given priority.

He stepped out of the aisle and into the pew in a motion that indicated to me he was interested in what I had to say and wanted to talk.

During our conversation, he confirmed something I had heard – that a planned lease on Franklin School has been annulled, and there is presently no intended use for the building. That being the case, it makes no sense to have the closure date for Franklin

written in stone.

It has been pointed out to me that the D.C. government likes to do these moves right at the onset of hypothermia season. D.C. Village was closed in October last year, and Franklin is due to be closed in October this year. As few as 10-20% of Franklin residents might be housed by Oct. 1, when that shelter closes.

Finding housing for Franklin residents presents a greater challenge in some ways than housing families, because of the chronic nature of their problems. In Franklin, DHS head Carter will have to deal with a much higher percentage of mental illness, drug addiction and evictions of those who are placed.

According to Carter, those who have not been housed by then would be moved to other shelters. So much for improving their lives. This looks like a lateral move to me.

In effect, Franklin would be an empty building with no intended purpose, and there would be a need to shelter the homeless. These are the conditions that caused Franklin School to be converted into a shelter in the first place. That brings us right back to square one.

Gales, the shelter that is meant to make up for some of the lost beds, will be run by the evangelical Central Union Mission. In addition to Gales School not having

enough space to accommodate the leftover Franklin residents, it also is a religion-based program, which is unattractive to many prospective clients.

The mission also has a strict no-smoking policy. They make people throw away all cigarettes, lighters and matches. Many choose not to stay for that reason, as well as other strict Mission regulations. For these reasons, it is not a suitable replacement for low-barrier bed space.

I also explained to the mayor that partial renovations have been done on the Franklin building in the last year. Beginning in March last year, and taking about two months, all the bathrooms were completely renovated. In November, a four-unit heating system was installed. Two water heaters have been added to the three that Franklin already had. And a new fire alarm system was installed this March.

Mayor Fenty said those were "improvements, not renovations." I asked him why the D.C. government would move the men out and gut the building after making all of these "improvements."

His response was, "Bottom line – Franklin is a bad building."

Knowing what we know now, here are

Franklin would be an empty building without an intended purpose, and there would be a need to shelter the homeless. These are the conditions that caused Franklin School to be converted into a shelter in the first place.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING...

April Fool's Issue (Street Sense, 4/2)

Your April Fool's edition was great! I was rolling in the aisles!

– Christine Matthews

A Step Backward This Morning

Ms. Osuri,

I work in downtown D.C. and have been so impressed with the impact that Street Sense has on our community. I try not to miss a single issue. Thank you and your organization for your work to make Street Sense such a positive force in our community.

Street Sense is a good newspaper, but it is much more than that. It has provided homeless citizens a step towards dignity through their written contributions to the paper and their vending of the paper on our streets. Buying Street Sense from a vendor gives me the opportunity to have peer-to-peer interaction with a person who happens to be homeless. We talk about the contents of the previous editions. Sometimes a vendor will point out the article they wrote in the current edition. Throughout the transactions we are on a level playing field.

This morning I came out of the Metro Center station at 13th and G. On every corner of that intersection there were young women in Street Sense vests jumping up and down, hawking Street Sense. I asked one of them why they were doing this and she replied, "We're helping that homeless man over there." I saw the vendor on the far corner surrounding by jumping, screaming young women. I cringed.

I ran a local nonprofit in the past and understand that well-intentioned organizations and individuals frequently come to you with an idea that they believe will further your mission. I also know that sometimes an idea that sounds okay around the conference table proves to be not a good idea when it is operationalized in the field. I think that today's experience falls into that category.

I urge you to not take away the dignity that vending Street Sense has given the homeless adults in our community by cooperating with well-intentioned volunteers who believe they are helping the mission of the paper by putting on the vendors' vests. In fact, they are eroding the hard-won success that Street Sense has achieved in our community.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this issue.

Sincerely,
Ellen Jones

Your thoughts and editorials are welcome.

Please e-mail content to editor@streetsense.org or mail to 1317 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

some possible courses of action I have to suggest:

1. **Eliminate** the October closing date and replace it with a progress-based plan, such as housing all but 100 residents before closing Franklin. Then, and only then, relocate the remaining residents.

2. **Clarify** what percentage of this year's 400 units of housing are guaranteed to go to Franklin residents. Work to have a certain percentage set aside for Franklin residents.

3. **Clarify** what criteria will be used to determine who gets placed in the new housing, bearing in mind that there are more than 400 people who have been homeless for more than a year and have some disabling condition such as addiction.

4. **Involve** the mayor more in the Franklin closure process, so that he receives accurate information and makes choices that are more informed.

5. **Disseminate** any and all information pertaining to the Franklin closure to the Franklin residents.

6. **Address** reasons for which a person might lose their housing before placing them in it. Put all plans to empty Franklin or house any particular resident on hold until it is reasonably certain that such efforts would not be counterproductive by residents losing the housing and returning to shelter.

7. **Create** a system of equal exchange by replacing low-barrier beds at Franklin with low-barrier beds elsewhere.

In closing, these ideas are by no means the only ones that will be presented as possible courses in dealing with the Franklin School Shelter closing. They are only intended to provoke thought and conversation.

Further input is needed and encouraged. Franklin residents should get involved in their issue. After all, this would be conducive to a successful and sustained recovery from homelessness.

Eric Sheptock, an advocate for the homeless, lives at Franklin Shelter. He can be reached at ericshoptock@yahoo.com.

POETRY IN PROSE By CJMJ1

The D.C. Riots: An Impression

An outburst of violent public disorder along the streets of 14th St., NW, H St., NE, and 7th St., NW, in downtown Washington, D.C., within 10 blocks of the White House. It was 7:16 p.m. on April 4, 1968.

The radio stations' breaking newflash, Memphis, Tenn. – an assassin had shot the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), one of America's most respected civil rights leaders, the father of three children and an activist for the empowerment and the advancement for people of all walks of life.

On that lovely spring night, Dub burning out of control.

Three days of rioting that burned a thousand buildings, uncontrollable, overburdened with people in the street, with 12 people dead, mostly burned to death

within their homes, after which truckloads of National Guardsmen began to patrol the city streets.

At the time I was only six years old, with no understanding of King's association with the nonviolent philosophy and fading relevance to our generation to come.

Now I know about some of the key players: activist Stokely Carmichael and friends accidentally, indirectly, started the three days of rioting.

Something happened that night that set Washington, D.C., apart from the cities across America.

D.C. became darkened from the fire's smoke that filled the sky. That was the night the city became Black.

For what it's worth, the people had to destroy D.C. to claim it.

No one wants to say it but that's what happened hours, if not days, after King was

For what it's worth, the people had to destroy D.C. to claim it.

killed. The seeds were sown violently in my city's neighborhoods. Aftermath frustration set in, the destructive fury of poor people now becoming poorer and home-

less from tearing up their own neighborhood. Businesses going out, if not burned out, replaced by drug dealers and ladies of the night.

This outbreak was deadly serious, but to quote Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., "The limitation of riots, moral questions aside, is that they cannot win and the participants know it. Rioting is not revolutionary but reactionary because it invites defeat. It involves an emotional catharsis but it must be followed by a sense of futility."

Just a look through the hourglass of time over 40 years of rebuilding the neighborhoods and businesses and industries in remembrance of Martin Luther King Jr., forefather of the passion for equality with an open path to worldwide liberation.

This poet and Street Sense vendor asked for his full name not to be used.

Drugs, from page 1

a child will influence your adult life.

In seeing their behaviors I wanted to live up to their expectations so I experimented and got addicted myself, which led me to being broke and eventually homeless, as well as fighting a lifelong battle with depression and bipolar disorder.

I know from my own learning, when I abstained from these addictions, I now am sleeping in an apartment, buying clothes and groceries and I am not begging for money.

Truth is, it is not just the homeless, who are addicts. Addictions are prevalent among the affluent, middle class and the poor.

Every community and family member has someone or knows someone who has a substance abuse problem. A drug does not discriminate from any class, race or gender.

Whole nations depend on the drug trade; the drug industry is profitable and lucrative. To look down on the homeless addict is cowardly. It ignores the real problems of drug use.

There is a huge market for drugs and the drug culture. You can even buy drugs on the Internet or overseas for a cheaper price than you can get from your local drug dealer.

In addition, as long as people are willing to get high, there will always be people who are willing to sell drugs.

It is trendy to label homeless people as drug addicts, crack heads and alcoholics. However, those in middle America who use Percocet, Vicodin and Xany bars are not seen as addicts. Drug use is rampant from the corporate boardroom to the pro athlete locker room, but the higher you are in society determines how drug use befits your reputation and standing.

You have two types of people in the drug trade: the dealer and the junkie. One cannot survive if the other is not around. To solve the drug problem you have to eliminate the avenues to get drugs and that will be a big difficult task.

But the ones who suffer most in the ongoing battle for drugs are the parents who try to



DAVID WILKINSON

It is trendy to label homeless people as drug addicts, crack heads and alcoholics. However, those in middle America who use Percocet, Vicodin and Xany bars are not seen as addicts. Drug use is rampant from the corporate boardroom to the pro athlete locker room, but the higher you are in society determines how your drug use affects your reputation and standing.

To look down on the homeless addict is cowardly. It ignores the real problems of drug use.

raise their children away from drug culture and the criminal activities that go with it. Oftentimes young people see their role models in fast car groupies and wild parties. What they do not realize is the price that goes with that lifestyle and that it could lead to death or prison.

The homeless addict is just one of the

problems of addiction but there are a broad range of symptoms that need to be addressed. I hope one day we can have a true discussion on addiction in America.

Jeffery McNeil regularly puts on a suit to sell Street Sense. He can be reached at jeffery_mcneil2000@yahoo.com.

A Message for the Presidential Candidates

By L. Morrow

This is a response to the Democratic and Republican nominees competing to live near the homeless at the White House.

Did you know that there are 3.5 million American homeless in the U.S. today and that number is growing?

Did you know on any given night in America that more than 800,000 U.S. citizens sleep outside in the streets? They include children and babies.

Did you know there is a new wave of homeless families coming to the streets of America?

Yes, I am speaking out about the mortgage crisis. J. P. Morgan buys out Bear Stearns for \$2/share while families are put on the streets of America!

Did you know?

Do I have to say any more about the crisis in America that is going on now that neither nominee has addressed to any homeless person or homeless family sleeping on the streets of America?

By the way, nominees, these are 3.5 million votes that you are overlooking, not to mention 800,000 votes that you might need!

To learn more about Street Sense vendor L. Morrow, see the back page of this issue.

StreetSense

Announces the First Annual David Pike Excellence in Journalism Awards

On June 12, Street Sense will give out the first annual Excellence in Journalism Awards in memory of its late board member and journalist David Pike. The awards honor print journalism that changes perceptions about homelessness, draws attention to the factors affecting homelessness, and influences social responses to homelessness.

Criteria

Submissions must:

- address homelessness or the causes of homelessness (affordable housing, mental illness, domestic violence, health care, for example)
- focus on the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area
- be published in a local or national print media outlet in 2007

Categories

- Investigative Reporting. Entries may be a single article or a series of articles and may include additional materials such as sidebars or illustrations.
- Editorial Writing. Entries may be one opinion piece or a series.
- Breaking News. Entries must showcase deadline reporting of a single event.
- Feature Stories. Entries may be personality profiles, trend stories, human interest stories, or any feature that is not a breaking news story. They can be a single story or a series.
- Photography. Entries may be a single photo or a series of no more than three.

Submission Guidelines

- Anyone can submit a story, whether you are a reader or the writer(s).
- Please submit the article electronically as a text, PDF or HTML attachment.
- Please include the name of the category you are submitting to, your contact e-mail, phone number and address.
- If you are the writer of the article, please include a brief biography about yourself.

The deadline for the receipt of all submissions is April 30, 2008.

Please send all submissions and any questions to awards@streetsense.org.

Get Twice as Much Street Sense Each Month Delivered Right to Your Door!

Do you want to continue to support Street Sense throughout the year?

Order a subscription today.

Not only will you receive 26 issues packed with all our latest news, poetry and photography, you will also help raise awareness about poverty in the D.C. area.

YES! I want to subscribe to Street Sense for just \$40 a year for 26 issues.

YES! I want to give half of the cost of a subscription to my favorite vendor: _____

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City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please make checks payable to Street Sense.

Mail to: Street Sense, 1317 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

Thanks for your support!

FROM THE CHAIR OF THE BOARD

The Quickening

By Ted Henson

In my first column as chairman of the Street Sense board of directors, I want to emphasize the importance of visualizing where we want to be in context of where we've come from.

I moved to Washington in August 2003 for two reasons: to follow my future wife Rebecca and to start a street newspaper. Those first few months in Washington were an epic time. Initially, we were a ragtag all-volunteer project of the National Coalition for the Homeless, with an operating budget of zero and a desk in the corner of a room that was shared by three people as its only office space.

Laura Thompson (before she was Osuri) came to the office on a daily basis, with business plan in hand and mock-ups of the paper. Her boundless energy and leadership are what guided those early days. Michael Stoops, from NCH, brought me to D.C. and has been a steady and loyal advisor to the paper ever since.

Vendors such as August Mallory, Fred Anderson, Conrad Cheek Jr., Phillip Howard, James Davis, Bobby Buggs, Alvin Dixon, Francine Triplett, Allen Jones and Leonard Cannady put feet to concrete and papers on the corners. Writers like David Hammond, Diane Rusignola, Fiona Clem, Gaby Coppola and Carolyn Cosmos produced dynamite news stories that the Post would have been lucky to run. And the list of volunteers who helped Street Sense survive and grow is nearly endless.

In a conversation that I had today with longtime vendor Martin Walker, he mentioned that if he had a place to live in, or at the very least a reliable alternative to wandering the streets at night or keeping an open eye at a shelter, he would be able to dedicate more of his energy to lifting himself out of his current, unstable situation.

Martin's comments relating where he wants to be came more than a week after Mayor Fenty and his director of the Department of Human Services, Clarence Carter, announced plans to create a Housing First fund and create 400 units of supportive housing for the chronically homeless in Washington. As various sides argue over the validity of the Housing First strategy, I know from talking to Martin that an apartment would be a godsend for him right about now.

While the City Council decides whether or not to approve the mayor's budget and to try something new, I feel it's important to take bold steps every so often and it's good to defer to those willing to make those leaps.

Organizationally, it is my goal as board president to help Street Sense formalize its operations and to make it more agile and equipped to service our staff and vendors. That means practical changes such as creating stronger HR policies, expanding services offered to vendors, and dedicating more effort to advertising and fundraising. I look forward to working with our board to making these things happen. I also look at the attributes of our staff and core of vendors and feel a sense of confidence in Laura's leadership, Koki's editorial finesse, Rita's passion and Larie's ambition.

It seems appropriate to conclude with words spoken by Martin Luther King Jr., who was assassinated 40 years ago this month. In his "Mountaintop" speech in Memphis, given the night before he was killed, King asks himself how he would answer if God were to ask him which period in time, out of all the ages, he would want to live in. Here is King:

"Strangely enough, I would turn to the Almighty, and say, 'If you allow me to live just a few years in the second half of the twentieth century, I will be happy.' Now that's a strange statement to make, because the world is all messed up. The nation is sick. Trouble is in the land. Confusion all around. That's a strange statement.

"But I know, somehow, that only when it is dark enough, can you see the stars. And I see God working in this period of the twentieth century in a way that men, in some strange way, are responding — something is happening in our world."

Community Service Index

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SHELTER

Calvary Women's Services
928 5th Street, NW
(202) 783-6651
www.calvaryservices.org

Central Union Mission (Men)
1350 R Street, NW
(202) 745-7118
www.missiondc.org

CCNV (Men and Women)
425 2nd Street, NW
(202) 393-1909
users.erols.com/ccnv/

Community of Hope (Family)
1413 Girard Street, NW
(202) 232-7356
www.communityofhopedc.org

Franklin School (Men)
13th and K streets, NW
(202) 638-7424

Gospel Rescue Ministries (Men)
810 5th Street, NW
(202) 842-1731
www.grm.org

John Young Center (Women)
117 D Street, NW
(202) 639-8469
http://www.ccs-dc.org/find/services/

La Casa Bilingual Shelter (Men)
1436 Irving Street, NW
(202) 673-3592

N Street Village (Women)
1333 N Street, NW
(202) 939-2060
www.nstreetvillage.org

801 East, St. Elizabeth Hospital (Men)
2700 MLK Avenue, SE
(202) 561-4014

New York Ave Shelter (Men)
1355-57 New York Avenue, NE
(202) 832-2359

Open Door Shelter (Women)
425 Mitch Snyder Place, NW
(202) 639-8093

FOOD

Charlie's Place
1830 Connecticut Avenue, NW
(202) 232-3066
www.stmargaretsdc.org/charliesplace

Church of the Pilgrims
2201 P Street, NW
(202) 387-6612
www.churchofthepilgrims.org

Dinner Program for Homeless Women
AND the "9:30 Club" Breakfast
309 E Street, NW
(202) 737-9311
www.dphw.org

Father McKenna Center
19 Eye Street, NW
(202) 842-1112

Food and Friends
219 Riggs Road, NE
(202) 269-2277
www.foodandfriends.org

Miriam's Kitchen
2401 Virginia Avenue, NW
(202) 452-8926
www.miriamskitchen.org

The Welcome Table
Church of the Epiphany
1317 G Street, NW
(202) 347-2635
http://www.epiphanydc.org/ministry/welcometbl.htm

MEDICAL RESOURCES

Christ House
1717 Columbia Road, NW
(202) 328-1100
www.christhouse.org

Unity Health Care, Inc.
3020 14th Street, NW
(202) 745-4300
www.unityhealthcare.org

Whitman-Walker Clinic
1407 S Street, NW
(202) 797-3500
www.wwc.org

OUTREACH CENTERS

Bread for the City
1525 Seventh Street, NW
(202) 265-2400 AND
1640 Good Hope Road, SE
(202) 561-8587
www.breadforthe-city.org
food pantry, clothing, legal and social services, medical clinic

Community Council for the Homeless
at Friendship Place
4713 Wisconsin Avenue NW
(202) 364-1419
www.cchfp.org
housing, medical and psych care, substance abuse and job counseling

Bethany Women's Center
1333 N Street, NW
(202) 939-2060
http://www.nstreetvillage.org
meals, hygiene, laundry, social activities, substance abuse treatment

Green Door
(202) 464-9200
1221 Taylor Street NW
www.greendoor.org
housing, job training, supportive mental health services

Friendship House
619 D Street, SE
(202) 675-9050
www.friendshiphouse.net
counseling and mentoring, education, youth services, clothing

Georgetown Ministry Center
1041 Wisconsin Avenue, NW
(202) 338-8301
www.georgetownministrycenter.org
laundry, counseling, psych care

Martha's Table
2114 14th Street, NW
(202) 328-6608
www.marthastable.org
dinner, education, recreation, clothing, child and family services

Rachel's Women's Center

1222 11th Street, NW
(202) 682-1005
http://www.ccdsd.org/howorwc.php
hygiene, laundry, lunch, phone and mail, clothing, social activities

Sasha Bruce Youthwork
741 8th Street, SE
(202) 675-9340
www.sashabruce.org
counseling, housing, family services

So Others Might Eat (SOME)
71 "O" Street, NW
(202) 797-8806
www.some.org
lunch, medical and dental, job and housing counseling

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Bright Beginnings Inc.
128 M Street NW, Suite 150
Washington DC 20001
(202) 842-9090
www.brightbeginningsinc.org
Child care, family services

Catholic Community Services of D.C.
924 G Street, NW
(202) 772-4300
www.ccs-dc.org
umbrella for a variety of services

D.C. Coalition for the Homeless
1234 Massachusetts Avenue, NW
(202) 347-8870
www.dccfh.org
housing, substance abuse treatment, employment assistance

Community Family Life Services
305 E Street, NW
(202) 347-0511
www.cflsdc.org
housing, job and substance abuse counseling, clothes closet

Foundry Methodist Church
1500 16th Street, NW
(202) 332-4010
www.foundrymc.org
ESL, lunch, clothing, IDs

Hermano Pedro Day Center
3211 Sacred Heart Way, NW
(202) 332-2874
http://www.ccs-dc.org/find/services/
meals, hygiene, laundry, clothing

JHR, Inc.
1526 Pennsylvania Avenue, SE
(202) 544-9126
www.jobshavepriority.org
training and employment

Jubilee Jobs
1640 Columbia Road, NW
(202) 667-8970
www.jubileejobs.org
job preparation and placement

National Coalition for the Homeless
2201 P Street, NW
(202) 462-4822
www.nationalhomeless.org
activists, speakers bureau available

National Student Partnerships (NSP)
128 M Street NW, Suite 320
(202) 289-2525
washingtondc@nspnet.org
Job resource and referral agency

Shelter Hotline: 1-800-535-7252

Samaritan Ministry
1345 U Street, SE, AND
1516 Hamilton Street, NW
(202)889-7702
www.samaritanministry.org
HIV support, employment, drug/alcohol addiction, healthcare

St. Luke's Episcopal Church
1514 15th Street, NW
(202) 667-4394
http://stlukesdc.edow.org
food, counseling

St. Matthew's Cathedral
1725 Rhode Island Avenue, NW
(202) 347-3215 ext. 552
breakfast, clothing, hygiene

Travelers Aid, Union Station
50 Mass. Avenue, NE
(202) 371-1937
www.travelersaid.org/ta/dc.html
national emergency travel assistance

Wash. Legal Clinic for the Homeless
1200 U Street, NW
(202) 328-5500
www.legalclinic.org
legal services

MARYLAND

SHELTER

Comm. Ministry of Montgomery Co.
114 W. Montgomery Avenue, Rockville
(301) 762-8682
www.communityministrymc.org

The Samaritan Group
P.O. Box 934, Chestertown
(443) 480-3564

Warm Night Shelter
311 68th Place, Seat Pleasant
(301) 499-2319
www.cmpgc.org

FOOD

Bethesda Cares
7728 Woodmont Church, Bethesda
(301) 907-9244
www.bethesda-cares.com

Community Place Café
311 68th Place, Seat Pleasant
(301) 499-2319
www.cmpgc.org

Manna Food Center
614-618 Lofstrand Lane, Rockville
(301) 424-1130
www.mannafood.org

MEDICAL RESOURCES

Community Clinic, Inc.
8210 Colonial Lane, Silver Spring
(301) 585-1250
www.ccweb.org

Mobile Medical Care, Inc.
9309 Old Georgetown Road, Bethesda
(301) 493-8553
www.mobilemedicalcare.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Catholic Charities, Maryland
12247 Georgia Avenue, Silver Spring
(301) 942-1790
www.catholiccharitiesdc.org

shelter, substance abuse treatment, variety of other services

Mission of Love
6180 Old Central Avenue
Capitol Heights
(301)333-4440
www.molinc.org
life skills classes, clothing, housewares

Montgomery County Coalition for the Homeless
600-B East Gude Drive, Rockville
(301) 217-0314
www.mcch.net
emergency shelter, transitional housing, and supportiveservices

VIRGINIA

SHELTER

Alexandria Community Shelter
2355 B Mill Road, Alexandria
(703) 838-4239

Carpenter's Shelter
930 N. Henry Street, Alexandria
(703) 548-7500
www.carpentersshelter.org

Arlington-Alexandria Coalition for the Homeless
3103 Ninth Road North, Arlington
(703) 525-7177
www.aachhomeless.org

FOOD

Alive, Inc.
2723 King Street, Alexandria
(703) 836-2723
www.alive-inc.org

Our Daily Bread
10777 Main Street, Ste. 320, Fairfax
(703) 273-8829
www.our-daily-bread.org

MEDICAL RESOURCES

Arlington Free Clinic
3833 N Fairfax Drive, #400, Arlington
(703) 979-1400
www.arlingtonfreeclinic.org

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Abundant Life Christian Outreach,
5154 Eisenhower Avenue, Alexandria
(703) 823-4100
www.anchor-of-hope.net
food, clothing, youth development, and medicines

David's Place Day Shelter
930 North Henry Street, Alexandria
(703) 548-7500
www.carpentersshelter.org
laundry, shower, workshops, hypothermia shelter

Legal Services of Northern Virginia
6066 Leesburg Pike, Ste. 500
(703) 778-6800
www.lsnv.org
civil legal services

Samaritan Ministry
2924 Columbia Pike, Arlington
(703) 271-0938
www.samaritanministry.com
social services, employment services, HIV/AIDS services

THE LAST WORD By Scott Nychay



The National Coalition for the Homeless is selling T-shirts with this editorial cartoon, designed by cartoonist Scott Nychay and featuring a punchline by NCH interns frustrated by what they see as a lack of will in Congress to combat poverty. Nychay's father died homeless on the streets. For more information or to buy the T-shirt, go to www.nationalhomeless.org.

VENDOR PROFILE

By Mara Schechter

L. Morrow



L. Morrow was born in Southwest D.C. in 1947. "I thought we had it hard," he said, because his family lived in the projects and had little money for anything aside from basic needs. However, he was lucky to have a loving family and a place to live, he said.

After graduating from Jefferson High School, Morrow went to college and then worked for the People's Involvement Corporation as a community consultant, where he ran a free lunch and after-school program.

Morrow decided to travel after his grandmother died, and ended up working at a daycare center in Chicago geared toward low-income families. The hardest part of the job, he said, was turning down children whose parents had not complied with the agreement to attend parent-teacher meetings. After five years there, he moved back to the East Coast, where he worked for a variety of service organizations.

While a working as a tenant coordinator for Tenants United for Public Housing in Boston, Morrow tried to empower low-income residents of the Rosedale Housing Project, who had been threatened not to bring lawsuits about maintenance issues against the owners of the building. He worked hard to find them a pro bono lawyer. As a community consultant for the Roxbury Community Health Center in Massachusetts, he collected 40,000 signatures from the community to have a vacant property donated as a local clinic. He wants his work to make an impact even after he is gone. "I plan to give something back to humanity," he said.

Morrow said he loves working at Street Sense. A vibrant and energetic person, he explained that one of his favorite parts about this job is his interaction with people. "If you don't have money, give me a smile," he often tells the people who pass him on the street.

He has another message to his audience: "For all the people who listen to me at Dupont Circle and Connecticut and Q, I want to thank you for buying the Street Sense paper and listening to me. Keep up the kindness, because the world needs more of it."

How did you become homeless?

Homelessness is a state of mind; you don't have to look or smell bad. If you have self-respect and dignity, others will respect you. I live in a homeless castle; my ceiling is the sky and my bed is the soft sheets of heaven. I give thanks in the morning for wisdom and spirit, which are my riches. Money was once my God, but now I see that the Lord will always provide a way if He sees that you are trying to lift up yourself.

Why do you sell Street Sense?

I agree with the paper's mission. I want to spread the word that we've all got to help one another: spiritually, mentally and financially, if possible.

Where do you see yourself five years from now?

Spreading human kindness to uplift the downtrodden, giving praise to those who are trying to make a better life, exploring business concepts to expand Street Sense.

Favorite book?

The book of knowledge, which is composed of all that you take in and learn from your experiences in this life. Then you can use it to go to the next phase of your life, and pass it on to people.

Favorite movie?

"The Message," a movie about Muhammad. They never show his image and it is a very deep story of how he spread Islam across the Middle East. When he conquers you, he makes you his friend.

Favorite food?

Oatmeal and cream of wheat. You can add honey and sugar to it, sit back with a stack of toast and watch TV.

Favorite music/song?

"Smile" by Tupac

L. Morrow reminds customers to only buy from badged vendors and not to give to those panhandling with one paper.

StreetFact

About one in five adults has a diagnosable mental disorder.

SOURCE: SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES

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1317 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

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A recent survey showed that less than half our readers pass along their Street Sense copy to friends. Please help spread the word.

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