



'Kicking It,' a documentary featuring homeless soccer players, opens Friday, page 7

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# Street Sense



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

June 25 – July 8, 2008 • Volume 5, Issue 17

www.streetsense.org

## Inside This Issue

### PROFILE Ida Mae Campbell Wellness Center

A new wellness and resource center opens today, a dream come true for one local advocate, page 3

### FICTION Buck Got a White Baby

A family gets an unexpected new member, page 10

### POETRY Random Acts of Kindness

Foster Jarvis writes about the unsung heroes, page 9

### EDITORIAL Power of the Individual

Street Sense reader Susan Nelson gives another point of view on Republicans, page 13

### LOCAL NEWS Four Ways D.C. Can Improve Homeless Services

A new Urban Institute study uncovers chronic problems in the system and makes four recommendations, page 5

### BACK PAGE Photo Finish

The David Pike Excellence in Journalism Awards honored talented writers, page 16

## 2008 Homeless USA Cup

Teams from all over the country are coming to D.C. to compete

### EDITORIAL

## All About the Game

By Maurice King

When one of my co-workers first approached me about participating in the D.C. street soccer team about a year ago, it struck me as sort of odd.

After all, I had not played since high school, 39 years ago, and I could not see myself as being an asset to any team. Nonetheless, I decided to give it a try.

One thing led to another, and I ended up becoming a regular member of the team.

Never mind how awkward I felt – and probably looked as well – I still stuck with it.

The co-worker who brought me on has moved on, both in terms of work and in terms of the team, but I'm still playing in the position of goal keeper, just as I began in June 2007.

Last year, I wrote an editorial about participating in the 2007 Homeless USA Cup with the D.C. team when we traveled to

See **Maurice**, page 12



Maurice King and coach Jony square off at a recent practice.

### A CLOSER LOOK

## This is Street Soccer

By Joe McKnight

Founded in 2006 by Lawrence Cann, the Homeless USA Soccer Cup is not your regular brand of soccer.

Forget large grassy fields, 11 players per team, and 90 minutes of play with a relatively small number of goals.

This is Street Soccer.

Played on an asphalt surface the size of a tennis court, only four players per team are allowed to play at one time in Street Soccer. Given the smaller size and 15-minute game length, the goals scored in these games can reach into the teens.

From June 27 to June 29, the Washington Kastles stadium, located on 11th and H streets, Northwest, will be host to the third annual Homeless USA Soccer Cup. With teams traveling

See **Soccer**, page 6

PHOTO COURTESY OF MEGAN HUSTINGS

### OUTREACH

## Shelter and Street Assessments Seek Those Most Likely to Die

By Brittany Aubin

Becky Kanis, director of innovations at the New York-based nonprofit Common Ground, knows a lot about counting homeless people.

Her organization has worked in New Orleans, Times Square, and Los Angeles, canvassing homeless people on the street in the morning's wee hours, conducting interviews and placing the most

vulnerable among them into permanent supportive homes.

Last week, Common Ground turned its reckoning powers and methodology on the District, with city officials, service providers and trained volunteers administering surveys to those on the street and 500 of the longest-dwelling shelter residents, according to Laura Zeilinger, deputy director of the Department of Human Services.

"The difference in D.C. is that it's

the whole city," Kanis said. Never before has the survey been conducted in shelters or on a citywide scale. And with the city pledging permanent supporting units to the 400 most vulnerable participants, stakes are high.

"The biggest challenge is really making sure the most vulnerable get captured," Kanis said.

Vulnerability, as defined by Kanis's organization, is determined by a list of factors, which,

combined, increase a homeless person's likelihood of dying.

Those with end-stage renal disease, HIV/AIDS, liver disease or cirrhosis are particularly vulnerable, as are those with high incidences of emergency room visits and hospitalizations or those with a triumvirate of mental illness, substance abuse and chronic medical problems. Being over 60 years old

See **Count**, page 4

stimulate  
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sense's  
success

For more info,  
see page 3

# StreetSense

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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.

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If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, or have a great article or feature idea, please contact us at 202-347-2006 or e-mail [editor@streetsense.org](mailto: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).

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PROVIDER PROFILE

# New Wellness and Resource Center is a Dream Come True

By Romney Smith

A dream and a grandmother's love led to the creation of the Ida Mae Campbell Wellness and Resource Center.

A joint venture between Pathways to Housing D.C. and the Ida Mae Campbell Foundation, the new wellness center will open to the District's homeless and mentally ill population today. Beverly McCollum, The Ida Mae Campbell Foundation CEO, agreed with Linda Kaufman, Pathways to Housing chief operations officer, that "neither organization could have undertaken this endeavor alone."

As a former employee of Pathways to Housing D.C., McCollum voiced his dream to open a safe, low barrier center that provided not only services to those in need, but resources to enable people to develop a more complete life. When McCollum's former boss, Kaufman, heard about available funding through the D.C. Department of Mental Health, she immediately called McCollum.

In October 2007, Kaufman and McCollum submitted a proposal and secured the funding in March 2008 to begin McCollum's dream. After months of planning and hard work McCollum feels "the wellness and resource center will provide a service combination unlike any other in D.C."

According to Kaufman, networks and peer support are what will make this wellness center different than any other center. McCollum

said he wants "to make the entire person whole again and give all of the resources possible in order to enable that individual to become an active agent in making their life the best it can possibly be."

The Ida Mae Campbell Wellness and Resource Center will combine mental and physical health services, life, job, computer, communication skills training, social activities and more.

The center has multiple staff members that are WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Plan) certified to lead life planning sessions. There are also trained group leaders who will lead peer support groups that will share experiences and successful ways to take back control of their lives. If anyone visiting the center wishes to contact a mental health professional, the center is equipped with free phones and large resource binders with contact information.

The center will also have volunteer nurses that come in once a week to help with physical health screenings and counseling.

Life skills will be taught by a combination of staff and volunteers from other organizations such as Dress for Success and the Department of Employment Services. The center is equipped with computers for basic training and resume creation workshops. Social activities include arts and crafts time, music, games, movies, social nights and potluck dinners.

McCollum's dream doesn't stop with the opening of the wellness center. Within the



PHOTO BY STEVEN MENDOZA/STREET SENSE

Beverly McCollum, CEO of The Ida Mae Campbell Foundation.

next ten years McCollum hopes to found the Ida Mae Campbell Leadership Academy. This academy will teach others how to begin a nonprofit organization, start up a microenterprise, and how to maintain a steady job while receiving social security benefits.

The inspiration for the name of the center comes from the maternal grandmother of McCollum. McCollum said his grandmother, Ida Mae Campbell, was "the only person that believed in me, unconditionally loved me, sup-

ported me, and gave resources." McCollum hopes that every person who enters the Ida Mae Campbell Wellness and Resource Center will experience that same spirit of support, encouragement, and family.

The Ida Mae Campbell Wellness and Resource Center is located at 1338 North Capitol St. NW, Suite 101.

The center will be open Monday through Friday 3 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## \$timate \$treet \$ense

We are calling on all readers to donate to Street Sense all or part of the money they will soon be receiving from the **Economic Stimulus Package rebate.**

The President is hoping that you will stimulate the economy with the purchase of a digital camera, designer purse or some other short-lived consumer good. But wouldn't you rather **invest that money in a worthy nonprofit** that will continue to thrive through your donation long after the camera has turned into junk?

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- \$600** All my rebate or the printing for half an issue
- \$300** Half my rebate or one new vendor computer
- \$200** One-third of my rebate or vests for 15 new vendors
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- \$60** One-tenth of my rebate or food for one vendor meeting
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## IN OTHER NEWS

By Mandy McAnally

### California: Authorities

#### Make Homeless Camp Sweeps

Authorities recently made sweeps of several homeless camps in Spring Valley, warning people to leave or be arrested. The sweep targeted land called Bamboo City by deputies.

The sweep was prompted by a rash of thefts and a recent fire.

The regional task force on the homeless said 101 homeless people were counted in Spring Valley during a one-day survey in January, compared with seven in 2006. Authorities believe about 30 homeless people were affected by the sweeps. Homeless people were given a bag of supplies and a list of shelters and other resources.

– San Diego Union-Tribune

### Connecticut: Homeless Man Gets Five Years for \$2 Robbery

A homeless man in Norwalk was recently sentenced to five years in prison for robbing a man of \$2 last year. The man pleaded guilty at state Superior Court to second-degree robbery and first-degree failure to appear in court.

Judge Burton Kaplan sentenced Bass to five years in prison on each charge. The sentences will run concurrently.

– The Advocate

### Indiana: ACLU Sues Indianapolis on Behalf of City's Homeless

The American Civil Liberties Union of Indiana is suing the City of Indianapolis on behalf of the city's homeless people. The suit alleges that police officers harass panhandlers and those who might be panhandling by requiring identification. "These are all people who are complying with the law and engaged in first amendment protected activities who are being told by the police they cannot do so," the ACLU said in a statement.

The city said that it will prove that "Indianapolis has adopted a model and lawful approach to dealing" with panhandling.

– WISH TV 8

### Massachusetts: City of Lowell Announces 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness

The city of Lowell recently announced a 10-year plan to end homelessness in the city, and asked stakeholders to help

find at least basic housing for all residents. Officials estimate there are several hundred homeless people in Lowell. The 10-year strategy involves a coalition of business leaders, nonprofits and advocates for the homeless collecting local data and learning how to apply for federal and state grants.

The plan calls for the city to build more affordable housing, rather than building new shelters. The plan also includes home-foreclosure prevention education and more student housing.

– Boston Globe

### Oregon: Washington County to Launch Homelessness Eradication Plan

Washington County plans to launch a 10-year plan to end homelessness next month. The county has donated \$100,000 to help initiate a strategy. Initially the homeless program will serve a minimum of 10 families in its first year. The program seeks to prevent more people from becoming homeless; provide more affordable housing; link people in need to services and jobs; and collect more current data on the problem. There were 1,200 to 1,600 homeless people in the county in 2007.

– Beaverton Valley Times

## Count, from page 1

also indicates high vulnerability to death on the street.

Street homelessness generates a very high mortality rate, Kanis said. Research on mortality in shelters is not available, she added.

Typically, Common Ground has found one or two individuals with six or more of the eight indicators, a handful with four to five and a majority with three. A few of those with one to two indicators might make the housing cutoff, in which case priority goes to individuals who have been homeless the longest, Kanis said.

"People on the street – they get it," she said. "They know who is sicker than them."

Pierre Moyer, head of homeless outreach at New York Avenue Presbyterian Church and a volunteer assessor, believes many of those 400 who do make it into housing will come from the street homeless population, although Zeilinger could not comment until the surveys are calculated.

A June 5 informal survey of the street population found 422 people, Zeilinger said at an Interagency Council on Homelessness meeting. The survey, however, was conducted a little after 9 p.m., Moyer said, much before many of the city's street population settles down for the night. He predicted the numbers would be higher when the surveys were conducted from 4:30 a.m. to 7 a.m.

Assessors went out June 16, 17 and 18, with each team assigned to the same spot every morning. This ensured most people were counted, even if they were not there one day, Kanis said. It also offered the assessors a chance to build relationships, Zeilinger said.

Since the surveys will be conducted early

in the morning, many people will be likely be sleeping, said Zeilinger at the June 12 Interagency Council meeting. If a person is too disoriented to answer the survey the first day, the teams will leave a short paper explaining the survey and noting that they will be back tomorrow, she said.

John McDermott, a homeless advocate, disapproved of the city's survey tactics. The 4:30 a.m. wake-ups were unnecessary, he said. It would be better to survey those at lunch programs or other day centers, McDermott said.

While conducting the surveys in the early morning might not be ideal, the city's timing was essential to capturing people who may be on the move during the day, said city administrator Dan Tangherlini.

Jana Meyer, the minister of missions at Foundry United Methodist Church and a volunteer assessor, agreed, adding that their training offered tips on waking people up. Meyer is enthusiastic about the commitment to housing, but emphasized a continued need for accountability from service providers and the city.

"We're clearly not going to get everyone," she said. "It's a work in progress."

The United Planning Organization, the group tasked with finding people sleeping outside during hypothermia season, has added its knowledge to the search and additional outreach teams conducted assessments in outlying areas of the city, Zeilinger said. Service providers that provide food and medical services have been encouraged to draft lists of their most vulnerable clients as well, she said. Those lists will be crosschecked with the city's assessments to identify people who were missed.

The city's willingness to embrace a change

on this issue marks a promising deviation from the previous stance of the Williams administration, said Moyer.

That dedication, among both the volunteer assessors and city officials, will go a long way in making this process a success, Kanis said. Commitment is necessary to thoroughly canvass and later, to identify and relocate the 400 people deemed most vulnerable.

The teams will take photographs, and several questions on the survey help pinpoint participants, such as where they spend their days and next of kin, Kanis said. Finding people again has not been a problem for Common Ground in the past, she said.

Once the 400 are found, housing and supportive services can be arranged quickly. In Los Angeles, it took the city an average of 14 days from when they found people to when they moved them into housing, Kanis said. In the District, the city is planning to move the 400 residents into housing by Oct. 1, Zeilinger said. Supportive services will likely start before the move-in.

Inevitably, more will be surveyed than can be housed. Only 400 spots are available this year, not even enough for all of the city's street population let alone the 500 shelter residents who have dwelled in the system the longest. Such is nature of the process, Kanis said.

The Department of Human Services is devising a system to track those homeless individuals surveyed this year, Zeilinger said, which will help to place individuals in another 400 single units and 80 family units next fiscal year.

"It's unfortunate that there is not enough for everybody immediately," Kanis said. But, she added, noting the first-come, first-served mentality of the current system, at least this gives "some method to the madness."

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# Four Ways the District Can Improve Homeless Services

## Urban Institute's New Study Lists Problems, Makes Recommendations

By Robert Blair

After almost a year of study, more than 200 pages and three reports, the District has four recommendations to improve its homeless services.

At the June 17th meeting of D.C.'s Inter-agency Council on Homelessness (ICH), Dr. Martha Burt of the Urban Institute presented an overview of the main recommendations of her recently completed comprehensive evaluation of D.C.'s homeless-assistance programs. The presentation took place before a standing-room-only audience at the Community for Creative Non-Violence building on 2nd Street, Northwest.

Urban Institute researchers, under a Department of Human Services (DHS) contract, conducted a nearly year-long review, the results of which run to 200-plus pages in three separate reports. Those reports, available on the Urban Institute's Web site ([www.urban.org](http://www.urban.org)), present detailed analyses of virtually all the city's homeless programs, processes, problems and populations served.

During her session at the ICH meeting, Burt, the study's lead researcher, described and explained the major steps she believes that the District must take to create an efficient and effective homeless-services system. Burt focused her ICH presentation on an overview of the study's four main recommendations. They are that the District should:

(1) Establish permanent supportive housing (PSH) units with excellent housing characteristics and excellent supportive services to be allocated to the city's most vulnerable homeless;

(2) Create a process for establishing priorities as to who among the city's chronically homeless and most at risk will have access to the new PHS units as they become available;

(3) Reconfigure the city's existing emergency shelter system to one with smaller shelters, better facilities and more complex services; and

(4) Revise The Community Partnership's homeless management information service (HMIS) to make it more flexible, useful and open than today's version.

The study points out that the first three recommendations are broadly congruent with the directions in homeless policy that Mayor Adrian Fenty's administration and the ICH are currently pursuing. In particular, Burt notes the work being done by the ICH's Supportive Housing Working Group to develop and implement plans to fulfill the Mayor's commitment to create 2,500 net new units of PSH. However, she also cautions that the new approach is only just beginning.

### The Community Partnership

The first of the three reports, "The Community Partnership and the District of Columbia's Public Homeless System," provides a detailed assessment of the activities and performance of The Community Partnership (TCP), the nonprofit organization through which funds from DHS and Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) flow to the city's publicly-funded homeless assistance programs.

The TCP report addresses two broad questions: What does D.C. get for the money it pays TCP? And, what does TCP do for D.C.'s community? In doing so, it covers several specific topics, including: (1) the upkeep of emergency shelters, (2) financial management of contracts and grants, (3) quality assurance and monitoring of resident programs, (4) data collection and analysis, (5) performance standards, and (6) training, communications and leadership.

The report's authors highlight a number of areas where improvement is needed. For example, they note that District-owned shelters remain in poor physical condition, that the numbers of clients per shelter is too high; and that TCP's ability to conduct complex analyses using the data they collect is hampered by software inadequacies and the inability to share data across programs (a "closed" system).

On the question of TCP's leadership role, the report points out that although TCP cannot provide the same degree of leadership it did in the middle and late 1990s, it still remains more flexible and nimble than DHS or any other government agency; knows the city's homeless system intimately, and knows how to get things done.

Even if TCP is no longer the leadership organization on homelessness in D.C., it can "get modifications and new ideas through the system better than anyone else," the report's authors assert. As a member of the District's ICH, TCP is seen as having the implementation skills needed to bring ICH-generated ideas to fruition.

### Transforming the System

The second report, "Transforming the District of Columbia's Public Homeless Assistance System," describes the makeup of D.C.'s homeless population and evaluates the various housing and supportive services available to them. It looks at how single adults and families use the city's emergency shelters, transitional housing programs and permanent supportive housing, their average length of stay in shelters, and their use of other assistance programs.

The report offers some interesting figures on shelter use. For example, an estimated 12,768 different single adults stayed in D.C. emergency shelters during the 12 months between Oct 1, 2006 and Sept. 30, 2007. Of that population, almost half – 47% – stayed fewer than 7 days. And 86% stayed fewer than 6 months.

On the other hand, a mere 4% stayed 365 days or longer, and another 10% stayed between 181 days and 365 days. Consequently, 14% of the single adult homeless population accounted for over 50% of emergency shelter beds.

The report's authors note that, because of that high-intensity shelter use, moving the 14% long-term residents into permanent supportive housing could allow the city to reduce emergency shelter beds by half. That would free resources to allow the city to design smaller, less crowded, and more effective emergency shelter programs for the 86% relatively short-term shelter residents.

The report also calls for more coordination, communication, long-term planning, and systematic cross-agency data sharing. "Ending homelessness for many people," the report notes, "requires coordinated services and information from widely differing areas of responsibility – from affordable housing, to employment, substance abuse, domestic violence, physical disabilities, and mental health." A successful system needs efficient coordination across government departments and service providers.

When that coordination is absent, according to some interviewees the authors talked to, homeless individuals can bounce around from emergency shelter, to clinics, to hospitals, to detoxification centers, to jail – in a process sometimes referred to as "the homeless shuffle" – unbeknownst to the public agencies and service providers who might otherwise be able to assist them.

### Major Recommendations

The third report, "Major Recommendations," is essentially an executive summary

### AT A GLANCE

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of the two longer reports.

The researchers' first major recommendation is to move the District's chronically homeless and at-risk individuals and families into permanent supportive housing. Burt stresses the importance of making sure that the various supportive services that people need are made available along with the housing units. That, she notes, would require the active involvement and financial support of several District agencies.

The second recommendation is for the city

See **Study**, page 8



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## MEET THE D.C. TEAM

By Joe McKnight

### Ala Kazm Riasn

Originally from Baghdad, Iraq, Kazm found out about the D.C. Street Soccer team while working temp jobs at Home Depot. Although Kazm hadn't played soccer for five years before joining the team, his skills are far from diminished. Over the course of a one-hour practice, he kicked the ball with such force that it became lodged in between the bars of the perimeter cage – three different times.



A year ago, Kazm was fired from his job at an oil company. Shortly thereafter, his car was impounded and he became homeless. Though his situation is tough, Kazm said, "Playing soccer again has been a good experience. It's a good way to meet people and helps to kill some time."

Kazm played soccer as a kid and on various club teams in Iraq – and it shows. He is extremely fast and has great skill handling the ball. Regardless of his offensive prowess, Kazm loves playing defense. When asked about the upcoming Homeless USA Cup in D.C., Kazm said, "I'm not sure what to expect, but am excited about the opportunity." Opposing teams should expect nothing but a challenge

when they lace up against Kazm and his teammates.

### Jay

Even though he has been in D.C. for only two months, Jay brings the necessary determination and grit needed to bring home a championship.

Like Kazm, he heard about the team working at Home Depot. While having been with the team for just two weeks, his play is hard not to notice.

"It's a lot of fun. It's nice to come out on Saturday, play soccer, and not have to stand in a food line. It's nice to forget about things for a while," Jay said.

Hailing from Canada, Jay has spent the last ten years "on the road, Jack Kerouac-style."

He played soccer throughout high school and recreationally afterwards. "While traveling around the country, I played in many Hispanic communities. That really helped my game."

When not playing soccer, Jay does construction, painting, and any odd job available. "It's become clear to me while standing in lines for work that my complexion (Caucasian), more often than not, helps me get jobs. I don't think that's fair, but that's the way it is," he said.

Jay has had to adjust to the different style of play and regulations involved in Street Soccer. Accustomed to large regulation sized fields in normal soccer play, Jay added, "Street Soccer is pretty new to me, but it's fun." When asked about his expectations for the upcoming tournament, Jay said, "My only expectation is that at the end of it I'll drop dead." Considering his

willpower and intensity, don't count on it.

### Maurice King

Maurice is one of the original members from last year's championships in Charlotte, N.C. "Going to Charlotte was fun. It was a challenge and we took it in stride," he said. Playing goalie for the team has also presented its own set of challenges. "Last year, I took a 90-mile-an-hour shot to the head which would've have been so bad if I didn't wear glasses." Still, he did his job, sacrificing his own skull instead of a goal.

Maurice has been living in D.C. since 2000. It wasn't until three years later and a divorce that he became homeless. Since then, he has been living at the CC&V where he works in the computer lab. It was there that Maurice learned about the D.C. Street Soccer team. "I hadn't played soccer since high school. That was 39 years ago, but I gave it a try and have been on the team ever since," he said.

Maurice said he "can't wait to see what it's going to be like to have the championships in D.C." While excited about the tournament, Maurice is grateful for the opportunity to play the game whether practicing or at tournaments. "Soccer is a different avenue of activity and has made my life more lively and enjoyable. It has also presented a new social avenue for me," he said.



### Michael Jones

Being the youngest player on the team, one might expect Michael Jones to be intimidated by more experienced veterans. However, the path Jones has taken to Washington, D.C., leaves few questions as to the strength of character of this 21-year-old college student. Not surprisingly, he has already made strong contributions to this budding team.

Now in his fifth week of residence in D.C., the Indiana native comes from a broken home where he was largely left to his own devices. By 13, he was already using meth and various narcotics for self-medication. By 17, he decided to get off drugs and pursue his neglected education. At 18, he was married and six months later, divorced. Working various jobs, he enrolled at Franklin College in Indiana, living with friends, in the gym, and sometimes, outside. It was at Franklin that he met Megan Hastings who told him about the National Coalition for the Homeless. NCH arranged for Michael to work for them through Americorp from May to early August. At summer's end, he is likely to return to school to finish his final year of college and graduate.

Once at NCH, Megan told him about the Street Soccer team. "I'm not really competitive, but it's a fun game. I really like defense," Michael said. Playing either left or right wing, Michael has one main goal for the tournament. "I played soccer in seventh grade, but never scored. I would love to score one goal during the tournament." Considering the obstacles Michael has had to overcome, don't be surprised if his wish comes true.

## Soccer, from page 1

from New York, Los Angeles and everywhere in between, 12 teams and more than 100 players are expected to participate. The D.C. Street Soccer Club will be one of them.

The D.C. Street Soccer Club started in May 2007 as a project of Street Sense, D.C.'s newspaper about poverty and homeless issues.

The team is composed of homeless and formerly homeless individuals and is a volunteer-run project. The team practices every week and belongs to a league on Capitol Hill, according to its Web site.

The first Homeless USA Cup was held in Charlotte in 2006 and was attended by 10 teams and 55 players, including a team from Washington, D.C. In 2007, Street Soccer USA and the Urban Ministry Center held a mini-tournament in Charlotte. Each of these tournaments determined the U.S. homeless national team to be sent to the Homeless World Cup that year.

### In the spotlight

Recently, Street Soccer has been given the cinematic spotlight. Sarah Koch, an award winning filmmaker, decided to undertake the task of creating a documentary film about Street Soccer. "Kicking It" highlights six international players who traveled to Cape Town in 2006 for the Homeless World Cup.

The producer of the film, Ted Leonsis, was skeptical about the project.

"When [Susan] first told me about the idea, I thought it was almost offensive and dumb," Leonsis said.

"Homeless people playing soccer? I thought it was exploitive. Then she showed me some of the footage," he said.

Leonsis stepped on board and upon completion, the film was accepted into the Sundance Film Festival. (For more on the film, see related story on this page.)

At Sundance, Leonsis met Lawrence Cann who was looking for a venue for this year's U.S. Cup. Leonsis, a philanthropist and consummate lover of sports, decided to underwrite this year's tournament.

Leonsis met Mark Ein, the owner of the Washington Kastles, who granted the use of this year's games in the new stadium.

"It's a family endeavor," Leonsis said. "My son is interning at the catering company that will provide the food throughout the weekend for the players and my friend, Russ Ramsey,

arranged for the players to be housed at George Washington University."

Besides the opportunity for players to win a variety of awards, the tournament's best players will be chosen to represent the U.S.

in this year's Homeless World Cup in Melbourne, Australia.

While skill is an important part of the criteria, the players' ability to be ambassadors and advocates for the homeless are just as crucial. The Homeless World Cup is composed of the best players from 48 countries such as Russia, Kenya, Brazil and Cambodia.

The upcoming competition can be life changing for players and fans alike.

"All of the athletes have been homeless within the last year," Cann said.

"This event recognizes the humanity and gifts of a misunderstood category inside our society. It instills values, permits players to self advocate, and challenges public opinion at the same time."

The players will have a chance to see the D.C. premiere of "Kicking It" on Saturday

*"When [Susan] first told me about the idea, I thought it was almost offensive and dumb."*

— Ted Leonsis

night, June 28, at the E Street Theater.

When D.C. United plays the Los Angeles Galaxy on Sunday, in front of 55,000 fans, all of the players will be recognized at centerfield during halftime for their accomplishments.

The schedule for the Homeless USA Cup will be centered around three different times during the weekend. The opening ceremony will be held Friday at 12:30 p.m., the semifinals on Saturday at 5 p.m., and the final matches on Sunday from 4 to 5 p.m.

"We hope to attract a crowd of 1,000 or more, especially on the final day," Cann said.

"Washington Kastles Stadium seats 2,000, so come one, come all. If your group is coming, please register with us by e-mailing volunteer@streetsoccerusa.org and we will announce you over the PA," he said.

The games are sponsored in large part by the Ted Leonsis Family Foundation, Nike, Wachovia Bank, and the US Soccer Foundation. Street Soccer USA, along with Street Sense and the National Coalition for the Homeless, are hosting the 2008 Homeless USA Cup.

Leonsis, once the skeptic, is now convinced of the value of the Homeless USA Cup and the Homeless World Cup.

"They're not forgotten. It elevates their personhood and dignity. Being a person who loves sports, I've seen how a goal can change someone's life," Leonsis said.

## MOVIE

**‘Kicking It’: Homeless Soccer Goes Global**

Documentary Chronicles the 4th Homeless World Cup and the Lives of 7 Players

By Robert Blair

What began as a wild idea over beers at a conference of street newspapers in Europe seven years ago is now an international sports event attracting 48 national teams from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe: The Homeless World Cup. Besides the annual tournament itself, the contest also involves an estimated 25,000 men and women worldwide who participate in preparatory training and national competitions.

And now, thanks to the talents of a local filmmaker, Susan Koch, a 98-minute documentary film about the 4th Annual Homeless World Cup soccer tournament in Cape Town, South Africa, and the lives of seven international players, is showing here in D.C.

**From Concept to Contest**

The original idea for a Homeless World Cup soccer competition was hatched by Mel Young, a Scot, and Harald Schmied, an Austrian, during the 2001 conference of the International Network of Street Papers, an association of newspapers and magazines that focuses on poverty and homelessness issues. They were discussing ways to get homeless people from different countries together and concluded that soccer, the world's most popular sport, would provide the ideal common denominator.

Two years later, with financial assistance from the Union of European Football Associations, the first Homeless World Cup became a reality. The matches were held in Graz, Austria with teams from 18 countries competing.

By the time Koch, an Emmy and Peabody award winning director, put together “Kicking It,” an engrossing and fast-paced documentary on the 2006 competition, there were nearly 500 players, from 48 countries participating in the 7-day event.

There were roughly 200 games played during the tournament, but the film focuses on a dozen or so key games played by the six

teams – Afghanistan, Ireland, Kenya, Russia, Spain, and the U.S.A.,.

Following screenings at the Sundance and Tribeca film festivals, “Kicking It” had its Washington, D.C. premier on June 21 at the American Film Institute (AFI) theater in Silver Spring, Md. Those who missed the AFI screening will be able to see “Kicking It” at Landmark’s E Street Cinema, between 10th and 11th streets, Northwest, beginning July 27.

**Teams and Players**

The film achieves a near perfect balance between a personalizing focus on the narratives of seven players from six different nations as they prepare for the competition, and the gripping series of fast-paced matches set against the stunning beauty of Cape Town’s mountains and seashore.

Following the AFI screening, Neil Barrett, the film’s director of photography, explained that, in selecting which countries and individuals to focus on, there was an

effort to show a variety of homeless situations as well as geographic diversity.

Afghanistan presented the homeless who had become refugees of politics and war. Kenya allowed a focus on material poverty. And the film presents the players’ individual struggles with alcoholism, addiction, and anger as well.

Perhaps most interesting was Russia. The featured Russian soccer player, and his team coach as well, were homeless because they had migrated to St. Petersburg, but could not legally register as local citizens. Lacking that registration, they were unable to work there legally. Their poverty and homelessness was by virtue of official fiat.

Individual and team attitudes toward the competition also

By Romney Smith

A popular sport, a need to raise awareness, an enduring and world-wide social issue and passion for a cause came together in an unusual way seven years ago.

In 2001, Mel Young, president of International Street Papers, and Harald Schmied, editor-in-chief of an Austrian street newspaper were discussing the future of street papers when they decided an international event needed to take place to elevate awareness.

By combining the most popular sport in the world, soccer, with the subject of homelessness – the idea of the Homeless World Cup was born, said Corrina McGowan of the Homeless World Cup Organization.

The first homeless soccer teams began forming and competing against each other in Europe and Africa in 2001. Just two years later, the first Homeless World Cup was held in Graz, Austria.

“The most important thing is the impact we are having on lives. Nearly 80% of players change their lives completely,” McGowan said. The Web site gives examples of soccer players becoming sober, securing jobs, education, reuniting with family, and a dozen have had the dream-come-true experience of earning a living with soccer.

Following the Edinburgh, Scotland, 2005 Homeless World Cup, various semi-professional and professional sports teams contacted the Homeless World Cup organization in order to contact a player. Twelve players from that tournament continued on to play semi-professional and professional soccer or become professional soccer coaches.

One of the most interesting facts on the Homeless World Cup’s Web site is about how fast the organization’s international competition has grown. The first Homeless World Cup tournament in 2003 had teams from 17 countries. Five years later, the 2008 Homeless World Cup in Australia will welcome soccer teams from over 45 different countries.

In 2009, the Homeless World Cup will be held in Milan, Italy. The organization is anticipating more than 700 players from 70 countries.

“Passion and heart shone through the Italian bid: passion to resolve homelessness; passion for football; passion to host the best ever Homeless World Cup,” Young said of why Italy was chosen as the 2009 location.

“To end homeless in the world, yes we need strategy, yes we need policy, but at the end of the day people must have the passion to end homelessness for it to happen,” he said.

The Homeless World Cup has a strong partnership with sports apparel and equipm(i)-33(p)-399e-11



Kazm goes for the goal at a recent practice with the D.C. Street Soccer Club. The team will play in the Homeless USA Cup this weekend, with a chance to make it to the Homeless World Cup in Australia.

### Movie, from page 7

displayed interesting contrasts. The Russian coach, for example, seemed almost to be engaged in a social crusade. Whatever his players' personal goals might be, a top place finish for the team was seen as a way to gain media attention in Russia to show homelessness in a positive light, to destroy stereotypes, and to end the silence about homelessness.

The Russians also seemed to show less ego than other players, and more of a sense of mission. As their coach said when asked who his star player was: "The best player of our team? The whole team."

The Spanish team, on the other hand, wasn't so much playing to win the tournament, as to – in their coach's words – "win the game of life." The featured Spanish player, Jesus, a 63-year old former bank robber, struggled valiantly to compete with the 20-year olds. The Spanish team was competitively weak, so their coach, it seemed, concentrated on finding ways to make their Cape Town experience something of value to help them when they returned to Madrid.

Although the film doesn't show a great deal of the Afghan team, their featured

player's reaction to life in Cape Town is one of the comedic treats of the film. Najib, who had fled Taliban-controlled Kabul, lived for three years as a refugee in Pakistan. He returned home after the Taliban were driven out, and became involved with street soccer. His reaction to suddenly finding himself a sports celebrity among unveiled women, and his attraction to a woman from the Paraguay team who also takes a liking to him, provides a touch of light-hearted humor to the film.

### D.C. Hosts USA Cup

Coincidentally, on the same weekend that "Kicking It" opens in D.C., 100 homeless soccer players representing more than a dozen teams from around the country will be competing here for the Homeless USA Cup, and for a chance to participate on the U.S. national team going to the 6th Homeless World Cup in Melbourne, Australia in early December.

An excellent introduction to the film is available on YouTube: "Kicking It Trailer." For more information on the Homeless USA Cup see [www.nationalhomeless.org/USACup\\_2008/info.html](http://www.nationalhomeless.org/USACup_2008/info.html). For background on D.C.'s own homeless soccer club try the "soccer" link at [www.streetsense.org](http://www.streetsense.org).

### Study, from page 5

to develop procedures for identifying and prioritizing who would be offered access to the next available permanent supportive housing. In determining who will have access to the planned 2,500 new units of permanent supportive housing, the report suggests that appropriate criteria might include each candidate's (a) length of stay in shelters or on the street, (b) frequency of use of emergency rooms, emergency medical services, detoxification facilities, psychiatric programs and jails; and types and levels of disabilities. A "vulnerability index" could be devised using a blend of such factors.

The third recommendation is for the District to eliminate the "warehousing" that occurs in a system of large shelters with limited case management and other services. Instead the city administration is urged to create smaller, specialized shelters with targeted services to help short-term residents achieve rapid exits.

According to the report's authors, that sort of reconfiguring of the system would require new intake, assessment and triage procedures, and a vastly improved HMIS. But it would also allow the District to establish measurable performance standards for the various types of smaller

shelters that would emerge.

The fourth recommendation is that the current HMIS be expanded and revised. The report calls on the District to collect more detailed client information from people using the city's shelter system, particularly longer-term users. It suggests the HMIS also collect information from outreach programs that work with "street" (as opposed to "sheltered") homeless.

"There [were] questions about homeless people or homeless-assistance programs that we could not answer," complained the report's authors, "because the Districts homeless management information system either did not have the relevant data or could not externalize the data it did have in a way that made analysis possible."

The authors also emphasize making the information system more "open" so as to allow information to be shared within the homeless assistance networks (although not with public agencies).

During her ICH presentation, Burt stressed that a more complete and useable HMIS could help improve assistance to individual clients, allow service providers to better track program performance, and give policy makers better data to use in future planning and program evaluation efforts.

## Homeless USA Cup

⚽ June 27 to 29 ⚽

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- ⚽ **Sponsors:** The Ted Leonsis Foundation, Nike, DC United, Washington Kastles
- ⚽ **Hosts:** Urban Ministry Center, National Coalition for the Homeless, Street Sense, US Soccer Foundation
- ⚽ **Cost:** FREE

If you would like to help out with the event or bring a large group to attend some games, please contact: [volunteers@streetsoccerusa.org](mailto:volunteers@streetsoccerusa.org).

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Your thoughts and editorials are welcome.

Please e-mail [editor@streetsense.org](mailto:editor@streetsense.org) or mail to 1317 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.

**Mirror Poem**

I hated you  
because you kept staring  
through my mirror  
and I hated  
your relentless upturned palm  
awaiting salvation from your hunger.

I avoided your houses  
that stank of piss and sweat and booze  
and sex, and the iron scent of fresh-spilled blood.

I feared your tribe –  
stooped shoulders standing in soup lines,  
bodies huddled under musty blankets,  
men gathered with brown bags in parks;  
I hated your calloused fingers curled toward me,  
beckoning ...

When my earth moved  
I scarcely noticed the opening tremors  
but then the bricks and stones of home  
rained down on me like hail from hell  
and a crevasse opened beneath my feet  
and sent me tumbling into the earth  
and face-to-face with you

Now I share your hunger  
and I look at the world through your eyes  
my upturned palm awaits your strength and knowledge.

I've moved into your house  
and, each night, sleep beside you  
for safety and comfort.

As I rest on benches  
and watch the hurried sidewalk strivers  
I comprehend why some hate me –  
I keep staring  
through their mirrors.

—David Harris

**Random Acts of Kindness**

The people who reach out to those who are less fortunate or to those in need  
of random acts of kindness, these are the true unsung heroes of our society.

The one who has enough courage and compassion to assist a complete stranger  
while passing him on life's road.

The one who stops to assist one helplessly in need.

The one who shares his substance instead of devouring it all in greed.

—Foster B. Jarvis

**Belly Up**

Hey GAL, in high heel shoes,  
dress so high I can see your ears.

Can't tell you this or that,  
your mom's not around, to see you clown.

So you walk from street to street,  
as though it was trick or treat.

Got a chance to save your soul,  
not much longer before you'll be ice cold.

Old folks done told you, it's not your dress,  
It's your soul, you need to CONFESS...

OR

Old men with teeth gone will remember you as  
BELLY UP, BELLY UP

—Mary Jane Owens

PRETTY RED'S FICTION *By Ivory Wilson*

## Buck Got a White Baby

**B**uck lives deep in the swamp, off the main highway that leads into New Orleans, at the end of a long, ten-mile dead-end dirt road.

At the end of the dirt road there is a huge trash pile where some white folks dump their garbage. Buck calls the trash pile his treasure box, because white kids leave things there that Buck can use – beer, tobacco, gum, candy, sometimes even some hooch. Some white kids also go there to make out.

Buck checks his treasure box every day, and once a week he hooks up his old mule – he calls him One Eye Tom – to a wagon. Together they ride into town, carrying fresh fish, coons, squirrels, and loggerhead turtles, hoping to make a few bucks by selling his catch to the locals.

Buck lives in a large one-room cabin that is left over from the slavery days. Buck has a wood-burning stove and a tin roof, but no electricity. Buck has a wife whose name is Sue, and a Carolina lantern for lighting. Buck and his wife drink well water.

Together they raise a little boy. They call him Black Boy. A mangy cow which they call Betty, and a hound dog called Old Lincoln make up the rest of Buck and Sue's household. Buck's shack is fifty yards from his treasure box. A further twenty-five yards from the treasure box is Buck's favorite fishing hole.

It's a sunny evening; the sun is slowly going down. Buck, Black Boy, and Old Lincoln are taking it easy, catching catfish. Buck is chewing some Red Man tobacco.

He spits and says, "Black Boy, I guess you and me and Old Lincoln are gonna do some hunting, yes sir." Just then Buck sees a red pickup truck that is pulling up by his treasure box.

As always, he makes sure that they aren't seen or heard when someone is at his treasure box. That's because some white folks come there to drink beer and do some target practice with their guns. They always taunt Buck, shouting, "You niggers better stay back if you know what's good for you." Buck never checks his treasure box until they are long gone.

The red pickup starts up and leaves. Buck says, "Black Boy, that didn't take long. They might have forgotten the beer they brought."

Old Lincoln took off and a few minutes later started to bark. Buck laughs and slaps Black Boy on the shoulder, saying, "You see, Black Boy, all I got to say is hunting – Old Lincoln know what to do. I might be back." Buck picks up his shot gun, shouting, "Hold him Lincoln, I'm coming."

Buck walks to the sound of Old Lincoln barking by his treasure box. He looks up at the trees but sees no coon. Buck looks the other way and sees Old Lincoln staring at a big rolled-up newspaper. Buck stops and says, "Lincoln, that's no coon. That newspaper is moving." He thinks "What the..." grabs his gun by the barrel and moves some of the newspaper. Buck's eyes get big as half dollars and he says, "Old Lincoln, what have you found? A white baby." Buck quickly picks up the baby, looking down the road to make sure no one is coming. "Come on, Lincoln, let's go home."

Black Boy looks up and sees Buck and Old Lincoln coming along the path walking slowly, holding a big ball of newspaper, carrying it as if he had two arms full of eggs, all the while looking at the newspaper. Black Boy asks, "Buck, what you got?" Buck doesn't answer and keeps looking at the newspaper. Black Boy gets up, walks over to Buck, looks at the newspaper and sees the baby.

Black Boy says, "Buck got a white baby" and asks "What are you going to do with it?" Buck answers, "I don't know." Then Black Boy says, "I know. Leave that white Devil here for the gators."

*Sue walks out of the cabin and looks up at the sky, holding her arms up, as if in a prayer. "Oh Lord, why us, why now?"*

Buck doesn't like that. "Black Boy, I can't do that."

Why not? thinks Black Boy and says, "The pain from them white folks is that they whip your back, and want you to call them 'Master,' but it doesn't hurt me no more. Just think. It wasn't long ago that you sent your son, Roy, a nigger like me, into town to get supplies with Old Tom. When they didn't come back we walked to town and found Roy swinging in a tree. Them white folks had hanged him and gouged out one of Old Tom's eyes. When you tried to cut him down, them white folks tied you to a tree so you could see Roy swinging with you. They didn't let me cut Roy down until sun-up."

Buck says to Black Boy, "I know we are niggers, but this is a baby, it don't know hate. Sue will know what to do, Black Boy. Get the fish and my shotgun and let's go home."

Walking fast, ahead of Buck, Black Boy keeps saying, "Buck got a white baby."

Sue is sitting on the porch, soaking her feet in a number 3 iron tub, chewing some of Buck's Red Man tobacco.

When she sees Black Boy coming, she spits and says, "Slow down, Black Boy. You got to skin those catfish before you can eat them. I haven't boiled the peas yet." But when she sees Black Boy's face she asks "Where is my Buck? Oh Lord, don't tell me them white folks got my Buck again."

"No, mamma Sue. Buck got a white baby." Sue sees Buck, runs toward him and says, "Give me that child and ya'll get in the house."

Sue lays the baby down on the bed and takes it out of the newspaper. The baby starts to cry and Black Boy says, "That baby is the Devil."

Sue looks up at Black Boy and says "Black Boy, sometimes you can be as mean as an old grizzly bear. It wasn't long ago that Buck and Old Lincoln found you and your mamma wandering in the swamp with fever. Your mamma died and we raised you. So I don't want to hear that foolish talk from you."

Black Boy replies, "Yes ma'am, my mamma died."

Sue shrugs and tells Black Boy to go get some fresh milk from Betty, the cow. Buck puts some water to boil, puts the coke bottle in it. He also cuts the small finger off a rubber glove, and puts the finger in the water with the bottle. He also asks Black Boy to get some cotton flour sack.

He sews the sack to make something for the white baby to wear. She is so little that she can only be a few weeks old. The baby is crying because she is hungry. Sue is upset because she already likes the baby. She spends half the night sewing tiny baby clothes. She knows that sack cloth is rough but it's better than nothing.

Everyone is already sound asleep, so Sue walks out of the cabin and looks up at the sky, holding her arms up, as if in a prayer. "Oh Lord, why us, why now? Before long you will be calling for me to Heaven and I won't be able to raise that little girl. She needs so much more than we can give, but we'll do our best. Oh Lord, you know that we are but poor niggers."

Buck walks out, sees Sue, holds her in his arms and says "Woman, we now have a little white girl. Did you leave her alone with Black Boy?"

They both hurry back into the cabin and find Black Boy sitting on the floor, holding the little girl in his arms. "Look momma, she's asleep now, but she had been crying." Buck and Sue look at him, smiling and laughing. "Momma, does that mean that we are going to keep the baby?"

"Black Boy, you are doing just fine." Black Boy lets the little girl sleep in his bed, and he sleeps on the floor. When he wakes up in the morning, Black Boy smiles and calls the baby Flower. Buck and Sue smile, too, and already feel attached to the baby.

Buck and Old Lincoln go outside to check the treasure box and see the red pickup again. Buck gets closer to the truck and hears a young woman crying, saying "Where is my baby girl? I can't see her. Oh Lord, I'm sorry."

She looks into the trash pile, still can't find the baby and gets into the truck, sobbing. Buck walks up to the truck and says "Come in. We found your little girl. She was wrapped in an old newspaper, right here in the trash dump. We should give her back to you."

Buck and the woman walk into the cabin and find Sue holding Flower in her arms. She looks up and asks Buck where he had been. He says, "Back at my treasure box where I found this woman crying." He looks at the young woman and says, "Don't worry. Your baby girl is right here."

Sue and Black Boy are sad, knowing that they would miss little Flower. The cabin would feel empty without her.

Looking out through the door, Buck sees that the pickup is parked really close by, too close for comfort. Knowing that the man in the truck might try to come in, but not knowing what he would do if he found them with the baby, Buck crawls out through the back window, clutching Flower in his arms. He puts her down at the back of the house and runs into the sugar cane field to find out who is standing by the door.

Right then, he sees that the young woman is standing at the back of the cabin, looking at Flower. She picks her up, hugging and kissing her. She looks at the sugar cane field and sees Buck standing there. Buck ignores her and walks back into the house.

There he sees Sue and Black Boy looking forlorn, sobbing. Sue hugs him and tells him that he is a good man. Buck says that he'll miss baby Flower. "We'll all miss her," says Sue.

The next day Buck, Black Boy and Old Lincoln are feeling down, missing little Flower. They walk up to the treasure box. There they find a 25-pound bag of rice, a 25-pound bag of coffee and a 25-pound bag of corn flour. There is also a letter on top of the bags.

He is wondering who left all those things. Perhaps the folks from the pickup did, but Buck cannot read or write. He nevertheless opens the envelope and finds a 50 dollar bill in it. Sue reads the letter. It says "I don't know who you are but I do know that you are black folks. My name is Louise. I am so grateful that you took such good care of my little baby girl."

*Ivory Wilson has written dozens of short stories. You can find him selling Street Sense at the corner of 11th and E streets, NW.*

## 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 someone who has a passion for helping empower homeless individuals and who has 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 With Case Management/Social Services Experience
- People Who Have Experienced Poverty

*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](mailto:ted@streetsense.org).*

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Check back next issue for the solutions to the June 11 and May 28 issues' puzzles.

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MY TURN AT THE TABLE *By Robert Broome*

## Chef Geoff's

Last week, I had lunch with a new Street Sense intern, Craig Downs. After walking past many different restaurants and not being particularly satisfied by their posted menus, we came across Chef Geoff's in downtown Washington, D.C.

On first walking into this upscale restaurant, we had a good feeling. The service staff, right from the beginning, was very helpful, professional and courteous. We beat the initial lunch hour rush by arriving in the early afternoon. After being immediately seated, our waiter approached us and took our orders for drinks, which came within seconds.

The low-lit, professional décor attracted many business professionals holding luncheons or simply enjoying lunch with colleagues. There was also a separate lounge area, with smaller tables and a full bar, where more casual dining experiences could be provided. We opted to be seated in the restaurant section to gain the full experience.

The tables were large and covered with white tablecloths, napkins, and dishes. Everything seemed to sparkle, and the server placed everything on each table with meticulous attention to detail.

For an appetizer, we ordered asparagus risotto balls with mozzarella. This slightly fried finger food came with an avocado sauce that resembled traditional guacamole. The presentation of this starter was exceptional, despite the rather small portion for the price.

We then ordered our main dishes. Craig selected the bison burger, and I ordered the steak sandwich, both lunch specials of the day. Judging by the size of our appetizers, we presumed that the main course would be proportionate and thus ordered dishes we thought would be filling. Between placing our orders and delivering them, our waiter came back three times to ensure that our water and soda glasses were filled.

Before our orders arrived, we were hesitant and thought that our dishes were either going to be delicious or just

mediocre. To our surprise, the portions were massive, served on large plates that seemed to be overflowing with food. At first, we both just looked at our plates, not knowing exactly where to begin.

The steak sandwich I ordered was served on a sub roll and was filled with meat, sautéed red and green peppers and pepper jack cheese. It resembled a fancier version of a Philly cheesesteak sandwich. The rest of my plate was filled with fries and a pickle spear. Craig's bison burger was just as large and was served with American cheese, horseradish sauce and grilled onions. Instead of plain potato fries, Craig's meal was served with red sweet potato fries, which were "a nice change," he said.

When we finally got past the spectacle that was the huge lunch we were about to consume, we dug right in. We had made it through about half of our entrees when we decided we had had enough. During our meal, we discussed places we had traveled and music we both enjoyed, discovering that we both liked a little-known bluegrass band called Old Crow Medicine Show.

Craig finished the meal off with a cup of coffee, which he felt was above average for restaurant coffee. Our waiter placed our meal in to-go dishes and promptly brought us our bill.

Overall, the best aspect of this restaurant, by far, was the service. Everyone we encountered was extremely friendly and really made us feel as though we were among the business patrons even though we were not dressed for the occasion. We were both satisfied with the quality of our meals and felt that just about anything we ordered would have been up to par.

I give Chef Geoff's an above-average rating. Although the prices were a little higher than Craig or I would usually prefer to pay, the service and quality of food made up for that. For anyone looking for a place to have a business luncheon, the atmosphere and service alone warrants a visit to this restaurant.

# Making it to the Table of Life

*By Jeffery McNeil*



Regardless of what is going on in the world, being a passionate game player helps me maintain a sense of balance in life. I love video games, chess and card games and the war-like sense of competition they

provide. No matter what game you play, there is always an opponent, a prize and a strategy; you must plan and set realistic goals to win. In certain games there is also an element of luck involved, however; you can do everything right and somehow the cards don't fall your way.

This sounds a lot like life, where sometimes people less talented than you get all the glory while you stay stuck in the trenches. You may sweat and toil while someone who squanders his or her life hits the Powerball jackpot because he or she saw a winning number on a bathroom stall. A mean-spirited person may get a huge inheritance while you are stuck flipping burgers at Wendy's. Life will deal you cruel blows, and there are many people with stories of victories lost and fish that got away.

My philosophy is that life is like a great poker tournament; everything you see at the card table, you also see in the game of life. There can be adversity – times when you're down to a chip and a chair and the fortunes suddenly change, making you the force that everybody recognizes. Sometimes you're just in the zone – the point where karma and life meet – and everything seems to slow down, get relaxed and go your way.

In this poker world there are also no excuses for why you're losing; you're just a lamb with a bunch of wolves ready to take everything you have on one hand. It's an awfully dark, Darwinian world of survival of the fittest. It doesn't matter who your family was or what status you have in life; all that matters is who is cashing out and who is going broke.

These ups and downs make it useless to reminisce on past accomplishments. During my life, I've observed that what you did in the past has no bearing on the future. You can be in the Ritz-Carlton eating caviar with the Duchess of York one day and be sleeping on the park bench rummaging through trash cans for a meal the next, so bragging about accomplishments is a waste of time and makes you complacent. Just as in poker, everyone gets a bad set of cards sooner or later. There are times when every card goes against you and opportunities seem impossibly distant.

I learned to be successful selling newspapers by realizing that I didn't have a great starting hand, but I had some chips and I became creative, used resourcefulness and employed ingenuity. I had goals I wanted to achieve, and I also planned my strategy around selling more than anyone else. I studied winners in other industries and used their models to sell newspapers. I used marketing and advertising and I picked the brains of the successful vendors. I never was against an idea, and I had a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

For me, the greatest joy of inner peace comes from being different, original and authentic. That peace comes from not really caring how others judge you or what society thinks when you're down on your luck.

At this point of peace, you see people as who they are, you see the good in everything and everybody, you don't pass ill will to people and you can see your own shortcomings with a sense of humility.

In a state of inner peace you have no envy or jealousy because you know that if you stick to your plan, opportunities will present themselves. The greatest virtue of all is patience, after all, and how you deal with those terrible periods of things going bad.

You must realize that life is not a hand; it's a series of hands, and how you manage success as well as failure will get you to the final table of life.

*Jeffery McNeil regularly puts on a suit to sell Street Sense.*

## Maurice, from page 1

Charlotte, N.C. for the games. This year, the 2008 Homeless USA Cup games are being held in Washington, D.C., beginning June 27 and lasting through June 29. Eleven teams will be participating in the games: Atlanta, Austin, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Michigan, New York, St. Louis, Charlotte, Richmond, Minneapolis, and Washington, D.C. The winning team will go on to the Homeless World Cup to be held in Melbourne, Australia, in December 2008.

Soccer – referred to as football outside the United States – played by teams of homeless individuals, has become a worldwide movement that is changing lives everywhere it is played. Teams currently exist in 48 different

nations. The sport gives motivation and empowerment to the participants who seek to rebuild their lives.

I wrote in my editorial last year about the very positive atmosphere that pervaded the games in the 2007 Homeless USA Cup. An almost addictive feeling went everywhere with the team during our stay in Charlotte. We were received very hospitably, saw a film about street soccer around the world, heard about programs for street soccer both in the making and in action in various locations in the United States and had the opportunity to

The real story will be told at the games themselves this weekend.

interact with the other players who had come for the games. When the awards were handed

out at the end of the games, the D.C. team was awarded the Fair Play Award.

This time, the games will be held on D.C.'s home turf at the Washington Kastles Stadium at the site of the old Convention Center on 11th and H streets Northwest. The playing field is much smaller than a regulation field (52x72 feet) and is surrounded by boards.

The rules of the game are considerably more restrictive than those for regular soccer. A game is composed of two halves of seven

minutes each in length with a one-minute interval between each half. The games are, as a result, very fast-paced and intense events played at close proximity in a very short amount of time.

The D.C. team has been practicing twice weekly in anticipation of the games. We are aware that the opposing teams have been putting in no small amount of effort as well. The competition will surely be stiff, with each team making its best effort to win. The real story will be told at the games themselves this weekend; it is then that we will see who is the real winner.

*Maurice King has been writing for Street Sense since January 2004. E-mail him at benadam@cyberdude.com.*

## Introduce A Friend To Street Sense

**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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Thanks!**

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Contact: Mercia D. Bowser, chairperson/facilitator

## Power in the Individual

By Susan Nelson

I greatly admire the goal of this newspaper and organization, and I strongly support its efforts. This may sound strange considering I'm a conservative Republican, but then again, maybe not.

There is a perception that Republicans don't care about the homeless. Indeed, there is strong opinion that Republicans don't care about anybody who doesn't make at least six figures. This opinion is generally due to the fact that Republicans traditionally oppose government intervention and entitlement programs. This isn't because we don't care – it's because we care tremendously and believe power lies in individual responsibility.

In the movie “Ray,” the biopic film about Ray Charles, the legendary musician's mother lets Charles feel around for himself and struggle to get up when he falls down after becoming blind during his childhood. It wasn't indifference that compelled his mother to do this: it was extreme love that caused her to go against every maternal instinct she had because she knew that doing everything for Charles would be detrimental in the long run.

This is not to say that Republicans believe we should toss the homeless aside and let them retreat into a “survival of the fittest” mentality. Many Republicans are dedicated Christians. As such, they believe it is their responsibility to assist the homeless and less fortunate, and not the government's.

Government interference makes the average person believe the problem is being taken care of and shirk personal responsibility to his or her fellow man. Individuals

do far more good than bloated government bureaucracies. They are much more efficient with their resources and much more giving of their hearts. They can also see when a person needs to find his or her own way. It is not evil to help somebody when that person is down; it is evil to manipulate somebody to keep that person in your political pocket.

What people often forget is that an emotionless government that gives you entitlements can take them away without guilt. Make no mistake, the government cannot give you what each human heart needs most: a human touch and the feeling that there is a living person – not an inanimate government program – that cares about you. As Mother Teresa said, “The most terrible poverty is loneliness and the feeling of being unloved.”

The government gives without love and takes without compassion. It doesn't see individuals, it sees a number, a mere data figure. Volunteers and donors see a human being, someone with potential given to him or her by God, created in His image and beautiful beyond description. We see somebody who laughs and cries and has dreams that government cannot possibly realize.

So in one way it might surprise you that I support this paper because as a Republican I'm often vilified. In another, it might not surprise you because this organization places responsibility on the newspaper's distributors and makes them realize that hope for their future isn't in the government, but in themselves.

*Susan Nelson has been reading Street Sense since 2005.*

## The Youngest Volunteer

By Rita Renee Brunson



office staff.

At 11 years old, Tesua Roberts is the youngest Street Sense volunteer.

On June 13, my granddaughter, Tesua, assisted Street Sense vendors and

“If I could hit the lottery or raise 5

million dollars, I would take all of my winnings to buy 20 homes to house the homeless, 20 schools and colleges to educate the homeless, and 20 grocery stores to feed the homeless,” Tesua said.

“The rest I would use to buy a huge 10-story building for Street Sense, because Street Sense will become bigger than all newspapers in the world,” she said.

“I was able to truly understand what it means to be homeless and if I could work some sort of magic, I would make the world homeless-free. Street Sense is an awesome newspaper. I felt truly blessed to be a volunteer for one day,” Tesua said.

**Your thoughts and editorials are welcome.  
Please e-mail content to editor@streetsense.org or mail to  
1317 G Street, NW, Washington, DC 20005.**

# StreetSenseNews

By Street Sense staff



Philip Mangano, the head of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, talks to awardee Mary Otto.

On June 12, Street Sense held the David Pike Excellence in Journalism Awards Ceremony and Reception. The event was to honor those in the mainstream press for their work covering poverty issues. And with a great ceremony and setting and about 70 guests, by all counts the event was a success.



Vendor Jeffery McNeil (center) mingles with guests with the dramatic view of the National Press Club providing a beautiful background setting.

The awardees included:

- Investigative Reporting: Mary Otto, The Washington Post, for her series on dental care for poor children
- Feature Writing: Arthur Delaney, Washington City Paper, for "Median Man"
- Photography: Mary Biddle, The Washington Post, for her photograph of the Dalai Lama at N Street Village.

Washington Post columnist Courtland Milloy spoke about the struggles to cover poverty issues and the impact of such articles. He even noted, "It's embarrassing when your editor comes up to you with a copy of Street Sense and asks why we didn't have this story first." And Philip Manga-



Vendor Patty Smith (back right) and guests enjoy great conversation over delicious desserts after the ceremony concludes.

no, the head of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, compared homeless advocates to abolitionists and spoke of the day when there would be a "Shelter Museum" in Washington, D.C.

Because of the success of this year's ceremony and reception, Street Sense plans to make this an annual event. So please be on the lookout for photographs and stories in the mainstream press – investigative pieces, features and editorials – that challenge stereotypes and show the true face of poverty. And please mail or e-mail the stories to us throughout the year at [awards@streetsense.org](mailto:awards@streetsense.org).

**INTERN INSIGHT** By Brittany Aubin

## Homelessness: A Loss for Words

A professor once started his creative memoir class by admonishing students to write the story they thought they would never tell anyone. Five years later, this is the column I thought I would never write.

I joined Street Sense six months ago. I passed through the church door as a second-semester senior, hoping to gain valuable clips and salve a guilty conscience. I was still reeling from the disconnect between my own American University privilege and the lives of the city's 6,000 homeless residents. I could write about that now, about how Street Sense bridges the divide of dignity between classes, placing faces, personalities and stories to the oft-avoided homeless population.

I could write about conversations with Jeff McNeil, with Moyo Onibuje, with Cliff Carle. Or moments of girl talk with Patricia Jefferson, Patty Smith and Alicia Jones. Or the kindness Orin Andrus shows for his cat, Cuddles. Or the smooth sales talk of Conrad Cheek Jr.

That column would be easy to write. It would also be easy to read. Because you've read it before. It's the homelessness paradigm we feel most comfortable in.

Yet, nothing about being without a home is comfortable. Not the park benches or shelters. Not dehumanization or degradation. And the paradigms shouldn't be, either.

Homeless, homelessness, homeless residents, homeless person – these words litter my articles at Street Sense. Nothing could be more literal. A coded adjective or noun that strips its article of identity and hope, wrapping gray woolen blankets across an objective black and white typeface. It is a panhandling addition to the lexicon, asking readers to throw out sympathy like spare coins into a cup.

I have come to hate this meaning that lurks behind the word 'homeless.' Yet, these two simple syllables have infiltrated my conversations and my paragraphs, a semantic necessity that causes me to reduce 6,000 unique individuals to a collective unsheltered entity.

'Homeless' when breathed into conversation among polite company often elicits a similar response, most like the one people reserve for babies and puppies. Creatures devoid of highly individual personalities and entirely dependent on the kindness of wiser, sophisticated humans for sustenance and protection.

At a recent Interagency Council on Homelessness meeting, activist Cheryl Barnes bristled at the term "chronically homeless." Noting her own history of homelessness, Barnes resented the label as too clinical, too hopeless. This term may power policy and aid advocacy, but it does little to alter the anonymity and powerlessness of the individuals to whom it applies.

This hate for 'homeless' with its gray-blanketed innuendos complicated my editorial internship. I have probed my articles and actions for pity like a doctor pressing for tumors beneath the flesh. I know there were moments when I pitied and moments when I lost hope. Moments when I wanted to ban these people and the narrow jail of a word they were pushed into from my otherwise uncomplicated existence.

Still, for now, a continued dependence on 'homeless' is necessary, if only because no other term exists. It is not within a journalist's power to redefine. That task lies in the community itself, both those who are domiciled and those who are not.

For me, the word will remain deep and dark; full of a shame and a tinge of guilt and a quiet desperation and a bitter slap across the face of society. My parting wish for Street Sense readers is that my reporting has brought a fuller understanding of 'homeless' and a challenge to the dominant framework in which this issue is enclosed.

I didn't want to write this column. I didn't want to acknowledge my own shortcomings or, worse, the shortcomings of words. As an activist and a journalist, I see a world whose justice is shaped and secured by words. Our language is powerful, rich, and wide. Its failure here scares me. In this, there is perhaps the only nuance where 'homeless' succeeds – it makes me uncomfortable.

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Thanks for your support!

# 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

Covenant House Washington (Youth)  
2001 Mississippi Ave SE  
(202) 610-9600  
www.covenanthousedc.org  
Housing, education, job development

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. Elizabeths 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.breadforthecity.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, 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.foundryumc.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

JHP, 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

## Shelter Hotline: 1-800-535-7252

(202) 289-2525  
washingtondc@nspnet.org  
Job resource and referral agency

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.bethesdacares.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.cciweb.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, job and HIV/AIDS services

**PHOTO FINISH**

# Excellence

By Jerry W.



Awardees and speakers for the David Pike Excellence in Journalism Awards Ceremony, held June 12, pose for a group shot with the award itself. (From left to right) Executive Director Laura Thompson Osuri; speaker Philip Mangano, head of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness; awardee Mary Otto, formerly of The Washington Post; speaker Courtland Milloy of The Washington Post; awardee Arthur Delaney of the Washington City Paper. See story on page 14.

**VENDOR PROFILE**

By Craig Downs

## Robert Broome



Robert Broome was born in Odessa, Texas, in 1976, a town made popular by the book, film, and television series "Friday Night Lights." After high school, Robert worked in the Texas oil fields until age 26, when he began hitchhiking to look for work.

His travels took him all over the Southern region of the U.S. until he finally ended up in Nashville to work for a traveling carnival company. Again, Robert traveled all over, most notably to Puerto Rico. After quitting the carnival gig over pay disagreements, Robert decided to move to Washington, D.C., because he heard of the great social services here.

Along the way, he was robbed of the little money he had and his only form of identification. He has been very thankful for the speed and courtesy in being issued a new ID, and hopes to find job security in the future.

Robert enjoys traveling and being outside, but only when his jobs give him enough security to not worry about money. His travels give him many things to think and write about, and he enjoys writing interview stories and short essays.

**Where do you see yourself in 5 years?**

Working in construction or some work that allows me to be outside.

**Favorite Movie?**

"The Crow."

**Favorite Music?**

Nirvana and Guns & Roses.

**Favorite Food?**

Mexican food, specifically Tex-Mex.

**Favorite Book?**

Dean Koontz's "Hideaway."

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

**StreetFact**  
**14% of the single adult homeless population account for over 50% of emergency shelter beds.**  
**See story on page 5.**

SOURCE: URBAN INSTITUTE, 2008

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