



From finding housing to quitting smoking, vendors share their News Year's resolutions, page 8

\$1.00
Suggested
Donation

Street Sense



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

December 27, 2007 - January 8, 2008 • Volume 5, Issue 4

www.streetsense.org



MELANIE LIDMAN/STREET SENSE

Vincent Blackson drives around nightly to offer blankets and access to shelter to D.C.'s homeless community.

The Hypothermia Hotline: Blankets, Shelter and Safety

By Melanie Lidman

Vincent "Bones" Blackson knows the hidden corners and shortcuts of the District so well he could be a tour guide. But when he drives around the city in his

big white van, he doesn't visit the monuments or memorials or political buildings. He crisscrosses the city, stopping at the less famous spots — behind churches, in front of libraries, in dimly lit parks.

"Bones," as he is known to his coworkers, is a shift manager for Shelter Hotline Transport, a van service that transports the city's homeless to various shelters and

See **Hotline**, page 4

On the Streets to Their Own Lease

By Katie Leitch

On a rainy Friday in October, a van pulled up to the I-395 overpass by the Potomac River. The van carried representatives from city departments and social service organizations, and the overpass was home to nine people living underneath. The representatives from the Department of Mental Health, the Department of Human Services, Catholic Charities and the Community Partnership had two things to offer under a new program called D.C. Fortitude: treatment for those struggling with addiction, and immediate housing in city apartments for everybody else.

By the next day, all nine people were either in a treatment facility or in their new homes. They signed the leases themselves, in their own names. Every one of them had been living on the street for at least three years.

"We had one gentleman who'd been on the street 40 years," said Denise Capaci, division director for adult and family services at Catholic Charities. "It's unreal. He didn't have a fixed address for 40 years."

D.C. Fortitude, funded by the Department of Human Services, is part

of a national approach to homelessness called "housing first," which bypasses the shelter system by moving people directly from the street into permanent housing.

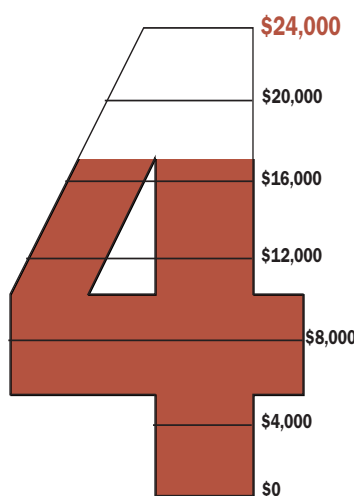
According to Pathways to Housing, a New York nonprofit and a housing first pioneer, it costs less to provide a homeless person with an apartment and support services than it does to put the same person in a shelter, a jail cell or a hospital. The "housing first" approach has been gaining momentum around the country, with support from the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness and with programs in cities like New York, San Francisco, Chicago and Philadelphia.

The approach has also been making inroads in Washington. The Community Partnership's Chronic Homeless Initiative has been providing permanent housing to homeless people with substance abuse disorders and mental illness since 2004.

When Mayor Adrian Fenty announced the closing of the emergency family shelter D.C. Village in October, he promised to move all the shelter's families into transitional housing.

See **Lease**, page 6

Do you want to support
"Four More Years"
of Street Sense?



See Page 3 for more details.

The Silent Epidemic of Rural Homelessness

By Lance Cheslock

In a recent publication, the National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) printed a map of the United States where each state was color-coded to reflect its "rate" of homelessness. It was no surprise to see that Washington, D.C., won first place for the nation's highest rate of homelessness, measured at 1% of the population. It is truly a national tragedy that our nation's capital would win this prize.

Yet hidden within these national numbers is another tragic reality: many rural areas throughout the United States have rates of homelessness even more extreme than Washington.

For example, in Colorado's San Luis Valley, a state-sponsored point-in-time census of the homeless showed their poor rural community held a rate of homelessness of 1.1%, a rate that is three times that of Denver.

Rural homelessness is a silent epidemic See **Rural**, page 12



Children are among the many hidden homeless in rural areas.

Inside This Issue

PROFILE Bus Tickets Aid

Travelers Aid helps homeless and stranded individuals with travel arrangements page 3

STREET POLITICS Heat or Eat?

How high energy prices hurt the poor, page 6

NATIONAL Seattle Passes Hate Crimes Bill

It will soon be a hate crime to attack homeless people in this Pacific Northwest city, page 7

REVIEW Steak and More at Morton's

Vendor Don Gardner reviews Mortons, page 10

EDITORIAL Readers Respond

Readers share thoughts on the "right to sleep" and opinions on homelessness, pages 12, 13

StreetSense

1317 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
Phone: (202) 347-2006
Fax: (202) 347-2166
info@streetsense.org
www.streetsense.org

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

James Davis
Robert Egger
Ted Henson
Barbara Kagan
Brad Scribe
John Snellgrove
Michael Stoops
Francine Triplett
David Walker
Kathy Whelpley

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Laura Thompson Osuri

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Kaukab Jhumra Smith

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

David S. Hammond
(volunteer)

INTERNS

Melanie Lidman
Desiree Perez

VOLUNTEERS/Writers

Matt Allee, Bob Basler, Robert Blair, Mary Cunningham, Lance Cheslock, Rick Dahnke, Don Gardner, Genevieve Gill, Joanne Goodwin, Laura Hazelton, Annie Hill, Dan Horner, Brooke Howell, Jo Anne Jackson, Angie Jones, Mary Lynn Jones, Jessica LaGarde, Brenda Karyl Lee-Wilson, Jeff Lambert, Katie Leitch, Mandy McAnally, Sam McCormally, Kate Mitchell, Kent Mitchell, Jonas Morris, Mike O'Neill, Swinitha Osuri, Diane Rusignola, Kat Schiffler, Dan Seligson, Eric Sheptock, Katie Smith, Patty Smith, Matt Taylor, Robert Trautman, Francine Triplett, Eugene Versluysen, Jerry W., Linda Wang, Dan Weingarten, Marian Wiseman, Nolle Wood, Corrine Yu

VENDORS

Willie Alexander, Michael Anderson, Jake Ashford, Tommy Bennett, Corey Bridges, Emily Bo, we, Bobby Buggs, Leonard Cannady, Cliff Carle, Conrad Cheek Jr., Walter Crawley Louise Davenport, James Davis, Bernard Dean, Muriel Dixon, Alvin Dixon El, Ronald Franklin, Don Gardner, Richard Gerald, Barron Hall, David Harris, John Harrison, Patricia Henry, Phillip Howard, Jo Ann Jackson, Michael Jefferson, Patricia Jefferson, Allen Jones, Mark Jones, Brenda Karyl Lee-Wilson, Charles Mayfield, Lee Mayse, Jennifer McLaughlin, Jermale McKnight, Jeffery McNeil, L. Morrow, Charles Nelson, Moyo Onibuje, Therese Onyemenon, Thomas Queen, Ed Ross, Kevin Robinson, Dennis Rutledge, Gerald Smith, Patty Smith, James Stewart, Gary Stoddard, Francine Triplett, Carl Turner, Jerry W., Mary Wanyama, Walker, Inell Wilson, Ivory Wilson, Tina Wright

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. And to support the increased production, Street Sense brought on its first full-time editor in chief in April.

Where your dollar goes...



25 cents
For Production

75 cents
To the Vendor

December 12 - 26 Donors

Above the Bar
Gary & Mary Ellen Albrecht
Rachel K. Banov
James Cassaberry Jr.
Kimberly Cannon
Craig Collin
Stephanie Clark
Robert J. Davis
Joseph Francis
Robin Goracke
Dave and Ann Gray
Christopher E. Goldthwait
Sebastian E. Heath
John Herron
Barbara Kagan
John Kang

Stephanie Kay
Bryan Keever
Alan Kline
Bryan Kurtz
David Madland
Dotti McKee
Celeste Monforton
Janet Montgomery
Ranjeev Purohit
Scott Reiter
Lois Riley
Sarah Rose
Kathrine Schmidt
Janet Sharp
Laura and Bill Slover
Elinor H. Stillman
Blair Taylor
Teaching for Change

John and Lilya Wagner

And a Special Thanks to:

Terri Anderson
George Eaton
Gerald Hauser
David G. Murray
Sanjeev & Pamela Osuri
Catherine Van Way
Brian Tefft

Thank You!

A special thanks to those that donated in memory of Street Sense board member David Pike

American Rivers Inc.
Katherine Borgen
Defenders of Wildlife
Ted and Kathy Gest
Chris and Nora Hohenlohe
Barbara Kagan
Anthony Mauro
Carlotta Richard
Eloise and Peter Smyrl
James V. Vicini
Rebecca Wodder

Street Sense

Vendor Code of Conduct

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

WANNA HELP?

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

If you are interested in becoming a vendor, contact Laura Osuri 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).

PROVIDER PROFILE

Helping the Homeless One Bus Ticket at a Time

By Desiree Perez

Bus ticket to any destination in the continental United States: \$64.

The help of a social service staff member: \$35.

Overhead at 25%: \$34.

Preventing a stranded individual from becoming homeless: Priceless.

Hidden away beneath an escalator, across from Gate D in the Union Station Amtrak terminal, is a stranded traveler's godsend: Travelers Aid International. Travelers Aid's primary purpose is to assist stranded individuals in their time of need. The organization lends a hand to needy travelers who can demonstrate that they are stuck in the District and have a home in another city.

Traveler's Aid has three District-area locations: Reagan National Airport, Dulles International Airport and Union Station, which is the only location that provides the services of a social worker. Nearly 80% of Traveler's Aid workers volunteer their services. A few volunteers have been there for more than 17 years.

"I really think we serve a vital role in this community," Sheila Dashiell, former volunteer and current program manager of the Union Station location, said. "[We work] with people, [and] with families that come to D.C. and become stranded for various reasons. A lot of it is economical reasons and finance – thinking that they can afford housing here, which, it's really not as affordable as some people think."

Travelers Aid assists a wide variety of individuals. Its clients include young men who have come to the city for work but can't find a job or affordable housing and young women escaping domestic abuse situations.

The organization also helps stranded individuals who are suffering with mental illness and patients released from hospitals or jails that have no way home. No matter the reason that a person or family has become stranded, Travelers Aid



From its booth at Union Station, Travelers Aid helps stranded and homeless people find their way home.

attempts to help them return home safely. The organization's service counters are open all but three days of the year, and a

social worker is always on call.

When a person comes to Travelers Aid seeking relocation they are put in contact with Director of Social Services Willie Ringold, who reviews their claim. In order to have a claim approved a person must demonstrate that he or she is stranded, which Travelers Aid defines as being stuck in the city for fewer than 60 days. The person also must provide a verifiable fixed address in his or her destination city, a process that is intended to prevent the arbitrary relocation of homeless persons.

Travelers Aid provides approved clients with tickets to their required destinations. A contract with Greyhound allows Travelers Aid to purchase a bus ticket to any location in the continental United States for \$64. The organization cannot afford overseas travel. Foreign individuals are directed to their home embassy and provided with Metro fare, if necessary.

James Sessoms, 42, of New York recently visited Travelers Aid after he lost his wallet while traveling to Bethesda, Md., to participate in a research study.

"After I finished the screening I came back to town, and I don't know anybody in D.C., not a soul," Sessoms said. "I went to the shelter, ate, slept, and this morning I got up real early, and then I went to the library. I figured, 'Let me get online,' you know, 'I can find anything on the Internet,' so I found a few shelters, pantries, but I didn't actually have enough money to go there or to call them."

Sessoms was considering shelter life and panhandling until his mother suggested during a phone call that he contact Travelers Aid. Sessoms spoke to a social worker and was provided transportation to his mother's house in New Jersey.

"I'm glad it worked out this way," Sessoms said. "Travelers Aid really helped me out. It's great, I mean, I haven't had a decent shower in two days. I haven't had a decent meal. I can't wait to get back home."

Visit www.travelersaid.org for more information.

Support "Four More Years" of Street Sense

As there is no president running for re-election this cycle, Street has decided to start a **re-election campaign**. So while Street Sense celebrates its first four years, we are making the familiar campaign call, asking the public for **"Four More Years."**

Like presidential candidates, Street Sense needs funding to make our re-election bid a success. And we are calling on readers to give what you can to help Street Sense to raise **\$24,000** to accomplish all our goals in the next term.

But unlike presidential candidates, Street Sense will uphold promises and truly help those that are poor and homeless.

So read the initiatives to the right and decide how you want to support Street Sense accomplish all our goals in **"Four More Years."**

My Information

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Please make checks payable to Street Sense

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

To Support "Four More Years," I Will Donate:

___ **\$44** because it's made up of two fours.

___ **\$60** to pay for a months transportation for one vendor, expanding Street Sense's vendor network into the suburbs

___ **\$100** to help pay for two public service announcements on Metro buses, increasing awareness about Street Sense.

___ **\$250** to pay for one week's salary for an editorial assistant, improving the paper's design and investigative news coverage.

___ **\$500** to pay for the space rental for Street Sense Community Forums, raising more awareness about poverty issues.

___ **\$1,000** to pay for one Vendor Scholarship, helping Street Sense vendors get further education and start small businesses.

___ **\$1,200** to help pay for the printing of one issue, when Street Sense goes weekly in 2010.

___ Another amount of \$ _____

Street Sense is a 501(c)(3), nonprofit organization.

All donations are tax deductible.

You can also donate by credit card online at www.streetsense.org.

operates continuously during the winter. The six vans spread out across the city every day and every night, offering an informal tour of the homeless hot spots and shelters in the District.

“Our primary goal is to get homeless people off the streets and into shelters,” Bones said. If the homeless individual refuses to go to a shelter, the drivers give them comfort items: hot drinks, gloves, long johns, socks, scarves, hats, or blankets, anything to help them get through the night.

The drivers check on homeless individuals and do their best to convince them to go to one of the District’s emergency shelters. Drivers strike up relationships with the homeless people they see every day, and they often check up on “their people” even after the shift has ended, Bones says.

When asked about his coworkers, Bones speaks affectionately of the community of drivers who patrol the streets of D.C. “Even our temp workers come back year after year—that’s why our continuity is so good,” said Bones, who is the shift manager of the 4 p.m. to midnight shift. He likens the drivers to a big family: “We’re away for the summer period, and then we’re all back together.”

7:55 p.m., UPO Building, Rhode Island Ave NW

Bones starts his run with plastic wrapped blankets and an orange crate of socks and gloves. After six years of driving the hypothermia van, Bones knows exactly where to go. He is in constant radio contact with the other drivers, monitoring which shelters are full and what areas of the city need to be covered.

Shelter Hotline Transport is part of the United Planning Organization, which runs community centers, preschools and shelters throughout the city. United Planning Organization is funded by the District through the Community Partnership for the Prevention of Homelessness.

Shelter Hotline Transport employs 36 drivers and 12 operators, dispatchers, and other staff during the “hypothermia season,” which is from Nov. 1 to March 31. The drivers work three shifts, from midnight to 8 a.m., 8 a.m. to 4 p.m., and 4 p.m. to midnight.

This Sunday night it’s 41 degrees, not cold enough for the hypothermia alert. The city puts out a hypothermia alert when the temperature goes below 32 degrees, or warmer if wind chill lowers the temperature.

8:07 p.m., 23rd and P streets

Anyone could drive past the church without realizing that the piles of blankets on the patio are people trying to stay warm. Tim, a Vietnam veteran sleeping behind the church tonight, says he just got a new job and is hoping to get off the streets soon, but for now he appreciates the extra blankets to share with his girlfriend.

The number of people the hotline brings to shelters varies depending on the temperature or the time of the month, according to Ruth Walker, the program director of Shelter Hotline Transport who has worked with the hotline for more than twenty years. At the beginning of the month, when many people get their checks, they go to hotels, she says.

During January, the busiest month last year, the hotline transported an average of 113 people to shelters every night, more than 3,000 trips during the month.

“We come through to make sure everyone’s taken care of,” Bones says. “I try to make sure nobody dies on us.”



Van driver Blackson hands a blanket to a homeless man, looking to keep warm on the streets near McPherson Square.

Shelter Hotline Transport is an all-encompassing safety net. They encourage citizens and law enforcement alike to help them reach every homeless person in the city by calling their toll-free number, 800-535-7252. The hotline estimates that 30% of their calls come from concerned citizens, 20% come from the fire and police departments, and 50% come from the homeless themselves, requesting transport.

8:15 p.m. West End Library

Under the overhang in front of the library, a group of seven or eight homeless people has set up for the night. Christmas music blares out of a radio, songs about warmth and fireplaces and frightful weather. Everyone is bundled in five or six blankets, some from the hypothermia van that passed through earlier.

One man missed the earlier van, so Bones gives him a few blankets. “They come, they bring us blankets every night,” said another man who declined to give his name. Every spot where the drivers know homeless individuals hang out is checked at least a few times every night. “We come through to make sure everyone’s taken care of,” Bones says. “I try to make sure nobody dies on us.”

8:36 p.m. McPherson Square Park, 15th and I streets

McPherson Square Park is known as one of the “high volume” areas where the vans stop frequently. Tonight, a group of five or six men are sitting around. A van has come by previously, so only one person requests blankets, and no one wants to go to a shelter right now.

Handing out blankets to the District’s homeless community looks futile to an outsider, like putting a Band-Aid on a gaping wound. No matter how many blankets are handed out or people transported to shelters, the problem is still there: people will still be homeless, and homeless people will still be cold.

But Bones doesn’t get frustrated by seemingly hopeless situation. He accepts that there will always be homelessness—not everybody wants to come off of the streets, he says a few times throughout the night.

Most help, he concedes, is beyond what the hypothermia van can do. Drivers can offer information about the maze of D.C. services, encourage some people to seek psychiatric help, or pass along job notifications. But mostly, Bones says, “we have an open ear for their situations.”

“You can’t get frustrated. It’s rewarding to find a person and then see ... [them] get back on medications, and they’re functioning normally again,” said Walker, the program director who

is on call for emergencies 24/7 throughout the hypothermia season. “It gives you a chill to say, ‘this is what I’ve done.’”

8:53 p.m. 5th and F Street

Bones stops suddenly when he doesn’t see one of his usuals outside the firehouse. “You seen our buddy at 5th and F?” he radios in to the other drivers. One responds that he saw the man earlier, gave him some blankets, and the man said he was doing OK but refused to go to a shelter.

Bones’ concern and dedication to the homeless transcends the normal parameters of a job. At times, he has given the jacket or hoodie off of his back, or extra shoes from his house, to homeless individuals. He regularly drives his daughter or nieces and nephews through the “bad” parts of D.C. to give them a better understanding of homelessness.

9:15 p.m. UPO Building

After a few more loops in the city, Bones heads back to the central dispatch office. He saw everyone that he wanted to see on this round, and he has to take over for the director of outreach who has been working since 8 a.m. and needs to get up early for his second job on Monday.

Before Bones started the job, he used to see homelessness all over D.C. but didn’t really think about it. Now, hearing all the stories of the people he works with, he has gained a different understanding. “Besides it being a job, this is something that your heart has to be in it,” he says.

As the mist turns into rain, the phone starts to ring more frequently with requests for transports to shelters.

Bones still has a few hours before he goes home, so he’ll probably go on a few more rounds of the city he has lived in his entire life. Along the way, he’ll supervise the drivers, check in with his regulars, and give out more comfort items. And perhaps most importantly, offer a smile and a friendly face to the homeless population of D.C.

Advocates Push Agenda to Help Queer Homeless Youths

By Laura Hazelton

Raquel (Rocki) Simões, manager of the Avenues for Homeless Youth shelter in Minneapolis, runs a community-based program for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender youth which matches adult volunteers willing to open their homes to young people who need them.

Rocki is acutely aware that the challenges faced by queer youth are often different from those faced by many of their straight peers. Seven different studies of homeless youth in America have found that about 20% of homeless youth are queer – meaning gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender – according to the National Alliance to End Homelessness. This is disproportionately high because only about 10% of youth in the general population are queer.

At the first national meeting on gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender and questioning (GLBTQ) homeless youth, held in downtown Washington, D.C. in October, several advocates and volunteers like Rocki from around the country talked about how to form a national agenda to deal with the unique problems that queer youth face in America.

Queer homeless youth are at higher risk for victimization and suffer higher rates of mental health problems and unsafe sexual behavior than straight homeless youth. They are likely to attempt suicide at more than twice the rate of their straight homeless peers, according to the National Alliance.

Representatives from the National Alliance to End Homelessness, the National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, and the Human Rights Campaign, were in attendance, in addition to homeless youth service providers, policy advocates, legal advocates and funding groups. Although no definite national policy came out of the meeting, the discussions that took place give an optimistic outlook toward forming a policy to help queer teens.

While there are many issues facing homeless teenagers in this country, the statistics of queer teens show a growing trend

that runs deep in the foster care system in America. A common perception is that queer teens are homeless because they were kicked out of their homes due to their sexual orientation.

While this is sometimes true, severe family conflict is the primary cause listed for queer teen homelessness, which can also include sexual or emotional abuse — not always a family conflict due to sexual orientation. Queer youth report sexual abuse before the age of 12 at nearly double the rate of other youth, according to the National Alliance.

Queer homeless youth are also disproportionately African-American or American-Indian and often belong to poor or working class families.

Many queer youth are also homeless because of abuse suffered in the foster care system, often because a foster parent did not want to accept a queer foster child. A national shortage of youth shelters and housing programs also result in many youth being denied assistance.

Many experimental methods to alleviate queer youth homelessness are in progress, many of which were discussed by homeless youth service providers and policy advocates at the meeting.

One suggestion several people agreed upon for a greater national focus on improving social services is to require foster parents to attend classes highlighting the specific issues and needs faced by queer youth. Additionally, the government would be required to remove the license of any foster parents who refuse these teens.

The National Alliance reports that early intervention and prevention services, intensive case management at shelter or drop-in centers, and youth housing with supportive services have proven effective in combating youth homelessness.

Advocates would also want funding for Runaway and Homeless Youth Act programs increase from \$103 million to \$140 million – these would offer residential services to 7,000 more youths and crisis intervention to 200,000 homeless youth.

DC's "Fat Gap" Highest in Nation

By Noelle Wood

Washington, D.C., tops the list of cities with a racial disparity in obesity, according to a recent Vanderbilt University study. Out of 164 jurisdictions studied, the District had the widest "fat gap," with an 8% obesity rate among whites and a 31% obesity rate among blacks.

Other counties in the region had smaller racial disparities, such as Montgomery County which had a 13% obesity rate among whites and a 22% obesity rate among blacks.

The study was presented in November at the American Public Health Association Annual Meeting. The study, which was based on 367,485 interviews from 2001 to 2005, found that while overall obesity levels were lower in concentrated urban areas, racial disparity in obesity was often higher.

"I suspect it also reflects the income disparity between whites and blacks in the District, which I believe is also very high," said Michele Tingling-Clemmons, a secretary for the Central Northeast Civic Association and a member of the National Welfare Rights Union.

"There are a lot of African-Americans with limited incomes, without cars, and with little access to supermarkets," said Tingling-Clemmons, noting that it is difficult to access fresh fruits and vegetables year round when there are currently only two full-service supermarkets in southeast D.C.

There are also few options for exercise for limited-income people who live in neighborhoods where they are concerned about safety, she said. "And that's assuming that people have leisure time to exercise," she said.

In June, Del. Eleanor Holmes Norton (D-D.C.), joined the "Food Stamp Challenge," and for a week limited food purchases to \$21, the amount received weekly by many food

stamp recipients. She and others writing for the Food Stamp Challenge blog said that this often meant passing up fresh fruits and vegetables.

The District has implemented some programs to try to tackle issues of obesity and nutrition. Some seasonal farmers markets take food stamps. The Farmer's Market Nutrition Program, which is operates in zones in 46 states and the District of Columbia, offers recipients between \$10 and \$30 a year in federal funds to use towards farmer's market purchases.

The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program goes to public schools and community organizations to discuss the benefits of fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains.

The difficulties of accessing healthy food are compounded for the homeless, who often find it difficult to store food or cook.

Shirley, a homeless woman who asks Dupont passersby for money, said she knows that she should eat healthy because she has high blood pressure, but that she often eats at McDonald's because it is the cheapest. Every once in a while, she buys food at a grocery store and goes to a friend's house to cook it, because the trailer-shelter she lives in does not have cooking facilities.

The Vanderbilt study was presented at the APHA Annual Meeting. During the meeting, the Association's Governing Council adopted policies calling on Congress to "improve access to fresh produce and healthy foods" for use in school lunches and food assistance programs. It also called on Congress to "shift federal subsidies to support products low in fat, cholesterol, sodium, and sugar" and to change laws that "promote agricultural interests over the interests of nutrition and health," according to an APHA press release.



Dana Woolfolk reads the names of deceased homeless individuals during D.C.'s annual Homeless Memorial Day.

Laura Thompson Osuri/Street Sense

DC Area's Deceased Homeless Honored

By Noelle Wood

Over 60 people gathered in McPherson Square on Dec. 21 for a memorial service to honor the homeless who died in Washington, D.C. this year.

At the candlelight service, homeless advocates read the names of the 107 people who died, some from hypothermia, others from preventable health problems. Nationally, over 2,200 homeless people died this year, according to Michael O'Neill of the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH).

The memorial service, organized by the NCH, the National Health Care for the Homeless Council (NHCHC), and the National Consumer Advisory Board (NCAB), was one of over 70 events coordinated across the country for the 18th annual National Homeless Person's Memorial Day.

Michael Stoops, acting executive director of the NCH, said that he is often called by the coroner to try to identify individuals who have died who may be homeless. "Many times, I was the only who knew them when they were alive and remembered their death. I was the only person to say goodbye. So this is a way to say goodbye to our friends who died homeless and in poverty," he said.

The memorial is held on December 21 because it is the longest night of the year and the first official day of winter. Standing in front of a banner that said "No more homeless deaths," moderator Michael O'Neill read a quote from John Lozier, "The days begin to get longer now, and our resolve for justice only grows stronger as we commemorate our losses."

JoAnn Jackson, who was once homeless and now works with the NCH Speaker's Bureau, also spoke at the service. "My main problem is that we're the capital of the United States," she said. "We can build baseball stadiums, we can build condos, why can't we build affordable housing? What comes first? A person's life? A child's life?"

Two representatives from the government, including Keith Cross of the Department of Human Services and Councilmember Tommy Wells from Ward 6, were scheduled to speak at the event, but neither attended.

Rico Harris, who is homeless, also spoke at the service. "I am proud to be here to recognize the members of this community who have died who were homeless," he said. "They have gone home, they have really gone home, and God bless them."

For the list of those homeless individuals that died in 2007, please see page 10.

Street Politics

By
David S. Hammond



Rising Energy Prices + Falling Temperatures = Disaster for Poor Americans

Everyone is watching rising energy prices, but poor Americans are already being hit – hard. And as gasoline, heating oil, electricity, and propane prices rise, lower income households face the threat of a permanent structural budget deficit. That's because although many households can make up for higher energy costs by spending less elsewhere, others have already been pushed beyond the familiar choices of "heat or eat, medicine or rent" because they have run out of places to cut spending.

"It's scary," said Ashley Durmer, a spokesperson for the **Citizens Energy Corporation**, a Massachusetts nonprofit that provides energy assistance to homes in 16 cold-weather states. "Any time you see temperatures dropping and energy prices going up, you're going to see more people needing help. People are struggling," she said. "Our phones have been ringing."

Durmer cited home heating oil prices that are up nearly a dollar per gallon from a year ago, to a record high of more than \$3.25 a gallon.

That change in prices means a change in who is asking for help. Households seeking energy assistance have "always been the very poor," according to Mark Wolfe, executive director of the **National Energy Assistance Directors' Association**. But "now it's the working families," he said.

The federal government offers fuel aid through the **Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program** (LIHEAP). Congress has just approved an increase in LIHEAP funding, but the need for help paying utility bills continues to rise. That's why about 20 states have energy assistance programs of their own, Wolfe said, and when prices are high, they'll sometimes put in more money. But he added that with many states facing deficits, it will be harder to put money into energy assistance.

The implications of this are worrying. "We're running into a real affordability problem," Wolfe said. "This is a new situation. Until about four years ago, energy was pretty cheap," but factors like increased worldwide demand are pushing up energy prices, he said.

And the impact of energy costs shows up at the bottom of the economic ladder: respondents to Colorado's 2006 Statewide Homeless Count identified trouble paying utility bills as one of the leading immediate causes of homelessness.

It isn't hard to see how that happens. George Coling, executive director of the **National Fuel Funds Network**, said "You pay the bill that can't wait." Members of his organization range from energy banks to utility programs, and they channel emergency money to people who can't pay their heating bills. "When the LIHEAP runs out," Coling said, "we're the providers of last resort."

How to Give People Income and Health Care: Hire Them, With Benefits

A new **Giant supermarket** in Southeast D.C. has made headlines, bringing a full-service food store to a community where the lack of supermarkets and other necessities has had residents concerned for years.

That means over 200 new jobs, according to Giant spokesperson Jamie Miller. Almost all of them are filled by Ward 8 residents, because hiring locally helps Giant with employee retention, Miller said. And the majority of those jobs come with health care coverage.

According to Miller, "The time is right" to open a new store in Ward 8, "because there's a community there now that can support a full-service supermarket."

And this new opportunity could also offer a way out of poverty. The challenge is to make sure there's enough opportunity – enough jobs, with adequate benefits – to go around.

Lease, from p.1

"If this is the direction the city's going, it would be nice if we could see how to make this work in Washington," Capaci said. "I think all of us who work in social services would like to believe there will come a day when we don't have a huge shelter system."

The Department of Human Services identified the overpass encampment as a particularly dangerous one, since the people living there had to cross the freeway in order to get to it. Representatives from the Department of Mental Health visited the overpass to evaluate its residents, and Clarence Stewart, the Community Partnership's Housing Director, was tasked with finding and furnishing the apartments. He did it in three days.

"Because of the relationships that Community Partnership has cultivated with the landlords over the years, it's been really great for us," he said. "I literally picked up the phone, called a couple of landlords and said, 'look, guys, I need you all.' And they were there."

The two people who are in treatment will be able to move into apartments once they've

completed their three-month program. The seven people who have already moved into their homes are visited almost daily by social workers from Catholic Charities, who are helping them apply for resources like health insurance, Social Security benefits and food stamps. The residents will be expected to contribute to their housing with 30% of whatever income they eventually bring in. After a few months, the case managers hope to step back and do less frequent, less intensive management, with an eye toward the final goal: independence in the community.

"It hasn't been a year or six months, but I can tell you that the progress with some of the residents is amazing," Stewart said. "And they have a key to a unit that is theirs."

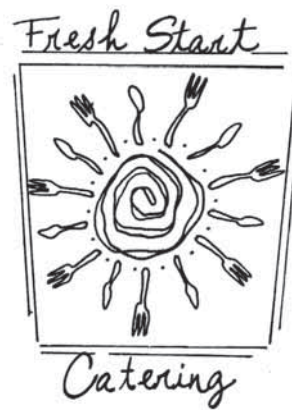
Some new residents have been making the most of that key, and that unit.

"He keeps his place so clean," Capasci said of one of the D.C. Fortitude participants. "I was in his unit on Monday, and he literally beams. The bed was made with perfection."

Program participants were unwilling to be interviewed or could not be reached for this story, Capasci said.

"It hasn't been a year or six months, but I can tell you that the progress with some of the residents is amazing," Stewart said.

for your next event...



- Continental Breakfasts
- Lunches
- Hot Buffets
- Plated Dinners
- Cocktail Receptions
- Weddings
- Bar/Bat Mitzvahs
- Fundraisers

...serve more than just great food

When you use Fresh Start, you help empower people. DC Central Kitchen trains formerly unemployed men and women for careers in the culinary industry. Fresh Start hires graduates of the Culinary Job Training program and gives them the chance to show their skills. Our revenue supports our mission to train even more people for success. **By using Fresh Start, you not only serve great food, you serve your community.**

freshstart@dccentralkitchen.org
202-234-0707

Mention this ad and receive a dozen free lemon bars!



Sign up for the Street Sense e-mail newsletter!

We'll deliver our top stories to your inbox every two weeks.
You can unsubscribe any time.
visit www.streetsense.org to join our list.

Seattle Ups Penalty for Hate Crimes Against Homeless

Angie Jones

Seattle's homeless are now identified as a protected group under the city's hate crime law.

On Dec. 10 the full city council voted unanimously to approve a proposal that would add homelessness to its protected classes under the existing Malicious Harassment ordinance.

This legislation is supported by Mayor Greg Nickels and was developed by the Seattle Human Rights Commission. This group and other community stakeholders cite the rise of brutal attacks on the homeless in recent years, including recent statistics by the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) which named Seattle the seventh-most dangerous city for homeless people.

"This has been a long time coming," says Leo Rhodes of SHARE, one of several to provide personal testimony of unprovoked attacks.

"There are countless stories people haven't heard, but when a homeless person speaks, no one listens," he says. "People out on the streets right now don't feel like human beings."

"We need to listen to the stories of homeless people," says Julie Nelson of the Seattle Office of Civil Rights. "When I think about the fact that this is tolerated, it's horrible, anything I have to say on the matter is sec-

ondary," she says.

Seattle's malicious harassment law expands on the state law by adding gender identity, marital status, political ideology, age, and parental status to its protected classes, and is meant to offer protection from bodily injury, physical confinement, property damage, and fear of harm.

Amending the ordinance allows prosecutors to charge defendants with an additional crime if the victim is homeless.

"What will help make this truly significant is if, when crimes are committed, the city attorney uses the law to its full extent," said Alison Eisinger of the Seattle King County Coalition on Homelessness.

But according to City Attorney Thomas Carr, the ordinance change will have little effect in court.

Carr supports the proposal. "It's a good change. It highlights things that are happening to homeless people," he says. But he is quick to point out that the city already takes the law as far as it can constitutionally.

"Seattle's existing harassment conviction

is a gross misdemeanor, with a maximum prison sentence of one year," he says. "A malicious harassment charge carries no greater sentence."

Furthermore, a malicious harassment conviction requires proof that the perpetrator targeted the victim *because* of his or her class.

"It generally won't be charged because a lesser crime with the same sentence will be easier to prove," Carr says.

The city charged just one person with malicious harassment this year, whereas 451 ordinary harassment charges were filed, according to court record.

But from the human rights perspective, the move to include homelessness

means everything.

In a statement released following the hearing, City Council president Nick Licata stated, "These changes will provide tough measures that demonstrate that the city will not tolerate this kind of behavior."

With the measure now passed, the homeless advocacy community plans to couple

it with a citywide educational campaign in schools (NCH statistics show that the majority of attacks are perpetrated by youth ages 16-19), for service providers, and for the Seattle Police Department.

They also share the goal of launching a campaign to include homelessness under the state's hate crime law. At the state level, malicious harassment is a felony and can be punished with multiple years in jail, says Carr.

"These changes will provide tough measures that demonstrate that the city will not tolerate this kind of behavior."

Foundry

United Methodist Church
A Reconciling
Congregation



Invites you to join us in
worship on Sundays
at 9:30 and 11:00 AM
Sign Interpretation at 11:00

Homeless Outreach
Hospitality Fridays 9 AM

Foundry United
Methodist Church
1500 16th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20036
(202) 332-4010
www.foundryumc.org

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

Monthly ANC 1C Business Meeting

Meets 1st Wednesday of each month
Next Meeting: Jan. 2 at 7 p.m.
Mary's Center (The Pink Building)
2355 Ontario Road, NW

ANC 1C Contact List

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



ANC 1C Committee Meetings

ABC and Public Safety

Meets 2nd Tuesday this month
Next Meeting: Dec. 14
Kalorama Park Recreation Center
Columbia Rd. and Belmont Rd., NW
(concurrent with PSA 303 meeting)

Planning, Zoning, and Transportation

Meets 3rd Wednesday each month
Next Meeting: Jan. 16
3rd District Police Station
17th St and V St., NW (Snyder Room)

Public Services

Meets 4th Wednesday each month
Next Meeting: Jan. 29
Kalorama Park Recreation Center
Columbia Rd. and Belmont Rd., NW

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

Vendor Voices: In 2008, I Resolve To ...



Emily Bowe
Start my own business.



Alvin Dixon El
Write poetry and become active with the Coalition for the Homeless's speakers bureau.



Dennis Rutledge
Love and pray for everyone all the time.



Mary Wanyama
Be more aggressive in my buying and selling of Street Sense. And if I get any other job, I will be happy.



Thomas Queen
Keep on doing it better, with God's help!



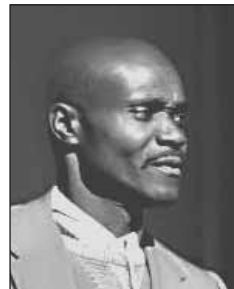
Leonard E Cannady
To have a place of my own to take care of my girl and my baby and live life and give back to where I came from.



Martin Walker
To get out of homelessness.



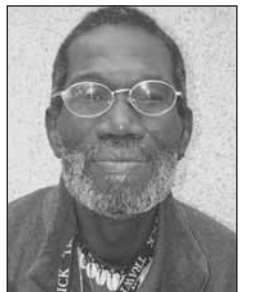
Jermale A McKnight
At least be in college.



Allen Jones
To acquire my own place and achieve my primary goals.



Phillip Howard
Hope to get Social Security income and a place of my own. And stay out of trouble.



Tommy Bennett
Stay sober!



Barron Hall
Get closer to God.



Patty Smith
Join the good fight to give the homeless homes. If Mayor Fenty can do it, we as a people can also help in the fight to combat homelessness.



Walter Crawley
To take better care of myself (healthwise) and to be a better person.



Richard Gerald
Get my Commercial Driver's License, find a better job, and spend more time with my children.



Muriel Dixon
Quit smoking (finally), take better care of my health.



Tina Wright
Get closer to God.



Therese Onyemenam
Quit smoking.



Lee Mayse
Have book done, raise my sales, and give all my money from selling the paper back to Street Sense because God has been so good to me and God loves a cheerful giver.



Francine Triplett
Stop smoking, and do more volunteer work and stay with Street Sense. Walk with God more.



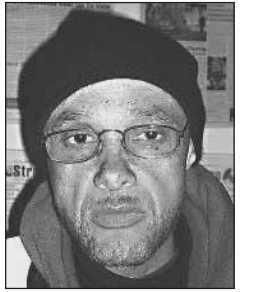
Moyo Onibuje
Try to sell more papers and expose myself as an honest and hardworking person. I would also like to furnish my new place nicely if I get it. Also to give up cigarettes and coffee.



L. Morrow
Help mankind to make our world a better place to live.



Brenda I Lee-Wilson
To fill with tangible love the void in my heart that has been present since my beloved Rowdy-Dawg went to heaven. And to give thanks to God for every breath I take.



Ivory Wilson
Be working a job.



Jeffrey McNeill
To find full time employment.



Carl Turner:
Have a part time job, and a place to stay.

The Jungle Creed

The Jungle Creed
 Is the strong must feed
 On any prey he can
 I sat at the feast
 And was branded a beast
 Before I became a man

—*By D.K., age 16, an inmate at D.C. Jail*

13th and U

13th and U is where I work
 Outside the Rite Aid store
 I greet the people with a
 Smile as they come out the door.
 I educate the public about the
 Issues of the day.
 I sell my Street Sense papers as
 Folks go on their way.
 Some people speak, some people frown,
 But some don't have a clue
 Why I spend my energy bringing news to you.
 I ask them for donations for the homeless and the poor.
 I know that Street Sense newspapers will open up a door
 For those of you who read it
 I'm sure you will agree
 The Post and Times they both fall short of the
 Awesome truth that be.

—*Alvin Dixon El*

Untitled

Seasons change, it's never the same
 Snow falling and rainbows calling
 From every corner of the land
 Melting tops let's take a walk
 And hear the joy that holidays bring
 Laughter cry don't ask why
 Children's time of the year

Creation gleams great love it sings
 Every time another one begins
 Floating carousels imagining dreams
 Can you whisper a word

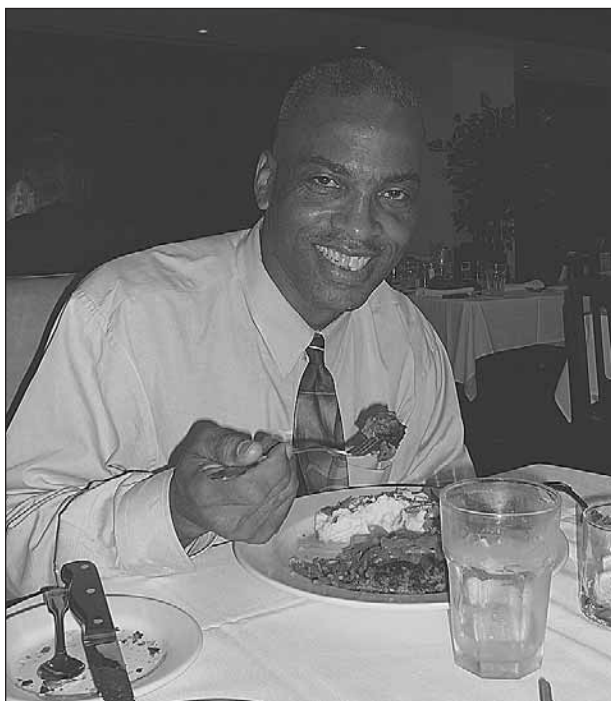
Spellbound without end
 Lights the eye
 For all the feast to be
 Counted expectations fulfill the need
 Like family and friends to thee

Presents wrapped to perfection
 God's love a warm reception
 Rendered at your feet
 Today is your day
 Be sure to pray
 For a special holiday!

—*Don L. Gardner*

MY TURN AT THE TABLE *By Don Gardner*

Prime Rib at a Prime Place



Don enjoys his prime chopped steak at Mortons

As Street Sense volunteer Brooke Howell and I entered Morton's Steakhouse, we were welcomed by a young woman. I was particularly impressed with the service at Morton's. Within 10 minutes, we had been visited by three servers: one who brought us water, one who welcomed us to the restaurant, and one who took our order.

Right away I realized this restaurant takes pride in its guests, its food and its atmosphere. I believe in getting straight to the point when it comes to service, so for starters, the service was excellent, the food was delicious and the servers were precise and prompt in seeing we were comfortable and satisfied.

Being a musician, my ears tuned right in to Frank Sinatra, who the restaurant was piping

through the sound system. Also, as I observed the atmosphere, I noticed the beautiful décor, which included cherry-stained furniture, lots of fresh flowers and mind-blowing photographs of famous people gracing the walls, all exemplifying life and strength. Everything was placed very well with a designer's touch.

As for the menu, Brooke feasted on the grilled rib-eye steak and I had the prime chopped steak. Both were served with mashed potatoes. We also had fresh green beans, which were excellent, and bread that was hot and delicious. And yes, the butter did melt.

Our food was ready in 20 minutes and we ate it, laughing and having fun, within 30 minutes of entering the restaurant.

For those of you wanting to eat outside at lunch or dinner, Morton's has patio seating that I thought was very romantic. In closing, don't forget to order their famous chocolate cake with ice cream. You won't regret it! So please take time off to enjoy prime steak at a prime place!

Don Gardner has been a vendor for two years and loves to sing and write poetry.

DC Homeless Individuals Who Died In 2008

Agbbayi/Fashina	Gary Connelley	Monica Johnson
Albert Rowe	Gebrehiwet Tekela	Omar Demasa
Alvin Caldwell	George Bradley	Paul Wilson
Alvin Carpenter	Gregory Smith	Quincy Gatling
Anna Jones	James Cole	Ralph Robinson
Annette Washington	James Goldsberry	Ralph Shakelford
Anthony Todd Seabrook	James Nesbit	Randall McGee
Arnold McDonald	James Seegers	Raymond Abbey
Benjamin Norris	James Smith	Reginald Durr-Bey
Betty Davis	James Thomas	Richard Moore
Betty Payne	James Williams	Robert Kelley
Betty Price	Jerry D. Brown	Robert Lee Gerald
Billy Carpenter	Jimmy Childs	Robert Williams
Bobby Bishop	Joshua Murray	Robert Wolinsky
Bryant Ford	Juanita Henderson	Ronald Holt
Carl Brown	Karen Chambers	Ronnie Tyson
Carlos Vaughn	Kathleen Bruce	Rufus Lavender
Charles Kesik	Kenneth Price	Russell Crestwell
Charles Lewis	Kenneth Wilson	Samuel Prosteler
Charles Smith	King Gregory Allen	Sandra Culbreath
Charles Winborne	Lakeah Davis	Sean Catlin
Chidi Ogene	Larry Blue	Sheila Watkins
Clyde Gant	Larry Skinner	Sophia Menatos
David Blake	Latoya Smith	Stanley Stevens
David Boyd	Leah Paramore	Suzanne Shriver
David McCullough	Lisa Smith-White	Sylvester Chase
David Tarver	Luis Ramirez	Towanda Davies
Delno Garnell	Marco Orelia	Tracy Shingler
Derrick Grant	Maria Piroglu	Vanessa Davis
Dewight Johnson	Marlys Chatel	Walter Carter
Diane Little	Mary White	Wanda Prillman
Edward Williams	Melvin White	Waynman Wise
Ernest Wood	Michael Boyd	William Barnes
Ezekiel Saunders	Michael Cornish	William Brown
Frances Baylor	Michelle Carter	Yvette Attaway
Fred Mitchell	Milton Alston	

For more information on the Homeless Memorial Day Service, remembering these homeless men and women, see the story on page 5.

Making Tax Time Pay: How to Claim and Keep the Money You've Earned



By Meg Newman

Did you know that taxpayers leave \$2 billion in tax benefits unclaimed? Is some of this money yours? Free tax assistance is available for income-eligible workers at convenient locations throughout D.C. You can avoid costly preparer fees and take advantage of fast, free electronic tax filing beginning in late January.

How can filing my taxes help me?

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is a unique tax credit for people who are working. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, 47,536 working families and individuals in D.C. claimed the credit in 2006 – returning nearly \$84 million to D.C., with an average refund of \$1,745 per household, equal to more than 10% of the filer's annual income. Yet one of every five or six people who qualify for the EITC doesn't claim it because they don't know about it, or they can't or don't file their tax re-

turns, potentially losing out on thousands of dollars that they may be owed.

Even if you don't qualify for the EITC, you might also be due a refund because you qualify for other credits and deductions or had too much taken out of your paycheck during the year. Many people who aren't required to file should file to get a refund. The only way to know for sure if you are one of these people is to complete your tax forms.

Where can I get free tax help?

Throughout the filing season, the D.C. Earned Income Tax Credit (DC EITC) Campaign operates sites across the region that offer free tax preparation and other services. Individuals with an income of below \$22,000 and households with a total income of below \$40,000 can go to a free tax site to get help completing their tax forms. A full list, map and searchable database of these free tax sites are available at www.dceitc.org/findasite. Your return will be prepared quickly and filed electronically to expedite your return check. It will also be reviewed several times to ensure accuracy prior to transmittal.

What's the catch? How do you offer this great service for free?

The campaign is able to operate thanks to

more than 600 community volunteers who receive extensive training to provide this service to the public. They are overseen by tax professionals well-versed in tax benefits for low-income filers, and when there is a particularly complex return, the campaign can link taxpayers to additional resources in the community. If you or someone you know is interested in registering with the campaign as a volunteer and participating in training, visit <http://www.dceitc.org/signup>. Spread the news about this unique volunteer opportunity – no experience is required.

Do tax sites offer other financial services?

Many neighborhood tax sites will offer asset-building resources in addition to tax filing. Some sites will allow customers to enroll in no-fee bank accounts on-site. Others will offer free credit counseling services, unique savings opportunities and information about benefits that can increase families' economic security. Visit www.dceitc.org for information about our "Super Saturdays" throughout tax season as well as other resources. Mark your calendar now for the D.C. Saves Financial Fair at THEARC on April 5, 2008.

I'm ready for my refund check now. Why shouldn't I get my taxes filed early through a

paid preparer?

Refund Anticipation Loans, or RALs, are a pricey and dangerous way to get money quick. These loans are made against an anticipated tax refund. If the refund doesn't come through as expected or is garnished, then the taxpayer must repay the difference plus the hefty interest rate (last year these rates ranged from 58% to 125%). Pay stub and Holiday RALs are especially risky because there is an increased chance of miscalculating the refund. Using a December pay stub alone, the preparer has no way to know what other income may affect the tax return – income, for example, from unemployment insurance, or another short-term job. Don't get caught in this trap! Filing your taxes electronically and using direct deposit can get your refund back to you within 7–10 days of filing, and you can avoid extra check-cashing fees and even direct deposit your refund in up to three different accounts.

This regular financial column is presented by Capital Area Asset Builders. Send questions or feedback on this article to saving@caab.org. Visit www.caab.org

For more information about free tax filing options and tips on how to choose a paid preparer wisely, visit www.dceitc.org/howtofile.

BOOK REVIEW by Robert Trautman

The Race Beat

"The Race Beat" tells the gripping story of the changing race relations in the South of the 1950s and 1960s and how media coverage gave new life to the changes, making the entire country aware for the first time of the extent of the wrongs being inflicted on its black citizens.

Newspapers, and later television, have long been criticized for ignoring the obvious and overplaying the mundane. While those criticisms are often valid, "The Race Beat" asserts that, in this case, the media got it right. The only valid criticism might be that reporters got into the story of a changing America a bit late.

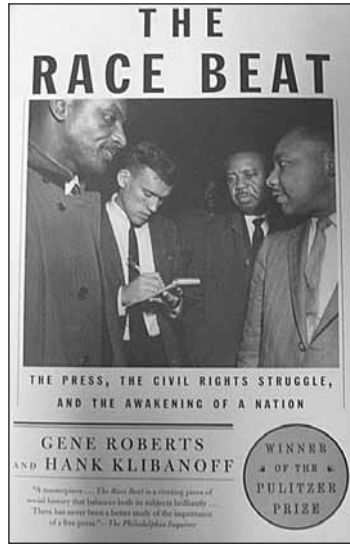
If anyone had thought that all had already been told about the civil rights movement and its leader Martin Luther King by the masterful works of Taylor Branch and others – wrong! This book looks at the sweeping changes in the South through a different set of eyes – the press – and how the leaders of the movement looked toward the press as a means to their end.

The authors of "The Race Beat, the Press, the Civil Rights Struggle and the Awakening of the Nation," (Random House 2006, Vintage 2007), Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff, are uniquely qualified to write this story. Roberts, a journalism professor at the University of Maryland, covered the civil rights movement for The New York Times while Klibanoff is the managing editor for news at the Atlanta Journal-Constitution.

Awareness of the media's role in any changes in race relations was foretold by Gunnar Myrdal in his 1944 book, "An American Dilemma." He wrote that "to get publicity is of the highest strategic importance to the Negro people," and added that the future of race relations rested in the hands of the media.

Roberts and Klibanoff noted that for years the "black papers" crusaded for an end to Jim Crow, but the "white" papers of the South relegated what black news they reported to their "colored" pages. There were exceptions however, and among the southern press were white editors who fought to end segregation, among them Harry Ashmore in Charlotte, N.C., and later Little Rock, Ark.; Hodding Carter Jr., in Greenville, Miss., Ralph McGill, in Atlanta and Jonathan Daniels in Raleigh, N.C.

But into the 1950s, the media, both in the North and South, were to a large part oblivious to the civil rights struggle. In fact, The New York Times assigned its education editor to cover the integration schools in Little Rock indicating that the editors of the paper saw the landmark event as first an education story. As events developed in Little Rock and elsewhere, however, the big metropolitan dailies in the East, Midwest, and West took note. The Times and Newsweek dispatched reporters, and so did the national television networks.



The Race Beat, the Press, the Civil Rights Struggle and the Awakening of the Nation

By Gene Roberts and Hank Klibanoff (Random House 2006, Vintage 2007)

And as the press swooped down, Martin Luther King Jr. knew the media would be critical in getting the story out.

Over time, the television networks were putting out powerful in-depth documentaries on racial discrimination and the Southern papers also began to record the changes in their neighborhoods.

But graphic television coverage could be a two-edged sword.

"Had it not been for television showing us Bull Connor and his dogs and the march on Selma, there would not have been the momentum to push the Civil Rights acts through Congress," said Ralph McGill, an editor in Atlanta. "It performed a magnificent service by showing violence, but now it finds itself trapped in carrying on in the same manner and seems to be incapable of providing anything except violence."

The print press, for its part, performed adequately as incidents across the South increased. Each paper demanded not only spot coverage, but also analysis, as disinterested as possible, of the long-term impact of the developments not only on the South but on the entire country.

The role of the press coverage of the civil rights movement was assessed many years later by John Lewis, one of the civil rights leaders and later a congressman from Georgia, who said that when Freedom Riders were jailed in Mississippi, a prison guard told them as they were locked up in a desolate state prison, "ain't no newspapermen out here."

Then, summing up the press and civil rights, Roberts and Klibanoff quote Lewis again.

"If hadn't been for the media – the print media and television – the civil rights movement would have been like a bird without wings, a choir without a song."

December Crossword

ACROSS

- 1 Swamp
- 4 Turn over
- 9 House
- 14 Time period
- 15 Loon-like seabird
- 16 Hard drink
- 17 Rapid eye movement
- 18 Mount Logan
- 19 Unresponsive
- 20 Canned meat brand
- 22 Church part
- 24 Loaf
- 25 Lilt
- 27 Bridge
- 31 National Alliance to End Homelessness (abbrv.)
- 32 Carrot cousin
- 33 Most basic
- 34 Dismay
- 36 End of hypothermia season
- 38 Air gun ammo.
- 40 Prop bullets
- 42 Make into a god
- 43 People who get things done
- 44 Time zone
- 45 Utilization
- 47 Beeps cousin
- 51 South of the border crazy
- 53 Cincinnati baseball team
- 54 Women's magazine
- 55 Peel
- 57 Sense
- 59 Rabbit
- 62 Afloat (2 wds.)
- 65 Understand
- 66 Singing parts
- 67 Minimal
- 68 Avenue
- 69 New supermarket in SE
- 70 Looking at
- 71 Crimson

DOWN

- 1 German capital
- 2 Potato brand
- 3 Risk
- 4 Opp. of pretty
- 5 Experts
- 6 Electroencephalograph (abbrv.)
- 7 BB association

8 Vendor who loves fishing

9 Tel. __

10 Hypothermia van driver

11 Poem of praise

12 Danish krone (abbrv.)

13 Snack

21 Benefit

23 Dined

25 Annoying insect

26 Cause of sickness

28 Leave the car

29 What children learn

30 Sponsor of the Homeless Memorial Day

32 Copy

35 Wooden sheet

36 Deface

37 Rejoin

38 Shekel

39 Earned Income Tax Credit (abbrv.)

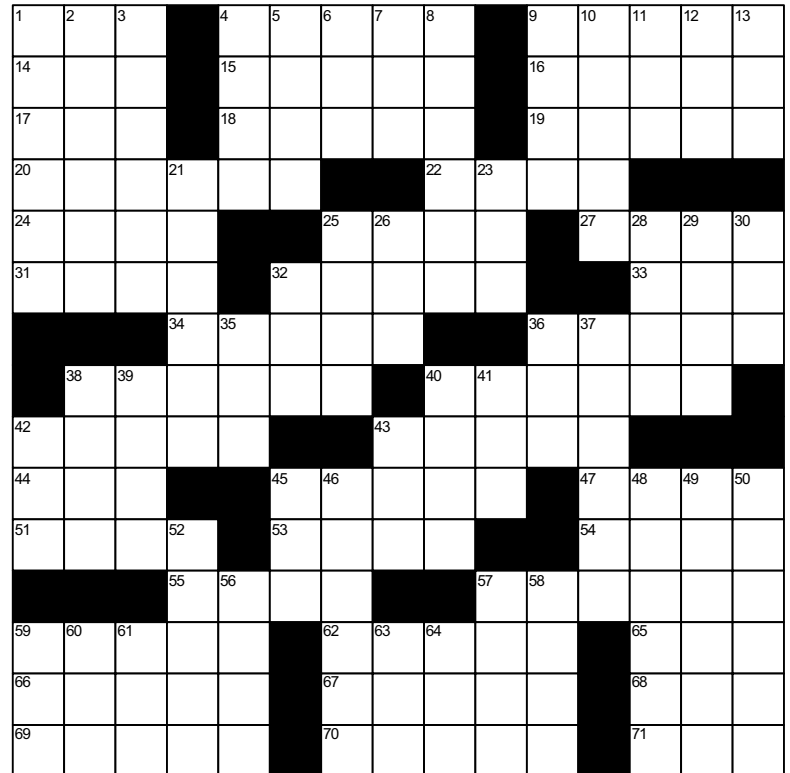
40 Swamps

41 Vendor who has a job at NIH

42 New Jersey's

neighbor
43 Father
45 Pot
46 Solemn
48 Sour ale
49 Coat part
50 Stroked the dog
52 Constellation
56 Institution (abbr.)

57 Was looked at
58 Powdered drink
59 Fall back
60 Boxer Muhammad
61 School group
63 Fiddle
64 Winter sport



PLACE YOUR AD HERE!

With Street Sense now coming out every other week and reaching nearly 11,000 people each issue, now is the perfect time to promote your business with us.

DEMOGRAPHICS

Who your business will be reaching can't be beat. Our typical reader is a 35-year old woman who lives in D.C. and works for the government or a nonprofit earning \$70,000 a year.

RATES

Rates are about half the cost of the neighborhood monthlies and are as low as \$57 for a 1/16 page ad that runs multiple times.

DISCOUNTS

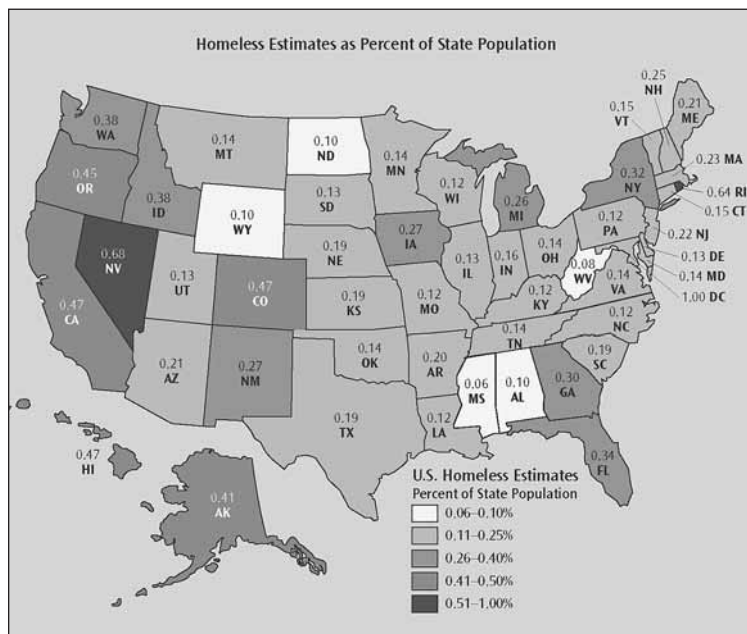
Discounts offered to nonprofits and to those that prepay for multiple ads.

Call Laura 202-347-2006 or email info@streetsense.org for more information and to get a copy of our new advertising brochure. Or ask your local vendor, who can earn 20% commission from ads sales.

Rural, from p.1

that afflicts thousands of individuals and families every year. The plight of the rural homeless receives little attention, and subsequently, only meager federal and philanthropic resources have come forward to address the problem. The result is often called “Greyhound Therapy,” meaning that the rural homeless are forced to migrate to the cities to find shelter and services.

In fact, there are many rural communities where counts of the homeless show rates much higher than urban averages. Rural areas in eastern Kentucky, northeastern North Carolina, the Mississippi Delta, central South Dakota, northwestern New Mexico, southern Texas, and northern Washington state, to name a few, all have rates of homelessness higher than urban norms.



Sir! Are You Hungry?

By Eugene Versluysen



In January, on a bone-chilling night, I was walking home after tutoring some high school students. As usual, I took a short-cut across Franklin Square, a stone's

throw away from some luxury hotels and fancy restaurants. Their patrons never venture there, afraid of the dark and of those who call the square "home." It's their loss. If they ventured there, they would be amazed to see who the denizens of Franklin Square are: dozens of homeless people who share the space with hundreds of ducks – only the ducks are there by choice.

Oblivious to the cold they huddle together in noisy, quacking clusters. Looking for food, they peck around at the barren soil. The homeless are less gregarious and much quieter, trying to preserve some privacy. Most are by themselves; a few stay together in twos and threes, passing the time, talking and smoking. Lying down, trying to be comfortable on the hard benches, they all clutch coats and blankets and keep their few possessions nearby.

But no one goes to sleep because the high point of the night is yet to come: the arrival of a small white truck that always parks on K Street, at the edge of the square. The truck is a bit battered and has

seen better days. Laden with food, it belongs to some good Samaritans. As soon as the canteen truck gets there, the men and a handful of women get up from their benches and stand in line.

There is no pushing or shoving; everyone waits patiently, shuffling forward in a tight, silent line. At the truck's serving hatch everyone gets a cup of hot soup and a sandwich. The two servers also make a quick check, making sure that their patrons are okay. Then everyone goes back, slurping soup and clutching the precious sandwich. With a bit of luck they will catch some sleep after that. But before that, some kind souls give a bit of bread to the ducks.

Seeing the truck, not everyone rushes forward. Some people stay put on their benches. Others, as if lost in thought, pace around. But that doesn't matter. They too get fed. As soon as all the people in the line have been served a young man walks around the square with a bag of sandwiches, a jug of soup and some Styrofoam cups, on his way to feed the shy and the recalcitrant.

And there I was, walking in the dark. Fearing that I would go away unfed, the young man called after me, "Sir! Are you hungry? Here's a sandwich!"

I thanked him and told him that I'm not homeless. That chance encounter on a dark, cold night isn't easy to forget, not least the fact that the young man called me Sir.

Eugene is a retired economist with the World Bank and a Street Sense volunteer.

Ode to a Farmers Market

By Jerry W.



The apple stand at the Alexandria Market displays its wares.

Tuesday, Nov. 27, 7 a.m. Here I sit early in the morning on a day when, last week, I would have gone to the farmers market.

I'm a writer for Street Sense and on the last day of the market I bought what I could carry and afford for the Street Sense writers group and office.

After purchasing bread and apples, I packed up trying to take away the feelings of a dying season, fall leaves, getting cold and wet at the last few market days, reminding us that we better get indoors somewhere.

My farmers market is a community microcosm. Even the PBS NewsHour came to interview people on the last day of the market before it closed for the winter. The PBS piece was broadcast on Thanksgiving during a program on sustainable agriculture.

Since my market closed, I have searched the Internet to find other markets that might

be open.

There was one close to where I live at Alexandria City Hall. There were lots of arts and crafts at the new market but I wanted something different, so I asked what were the healthiest low fat, low sugar, but natural ingredients the bakeries had.

There was nothing available, so I wandered over to the healthy chocolate vendor, asking how one of the four basic food groups, caffeine, nicotine, sugar and alcohol will meet the minimum daily recommended allowances?

She was pleasant and we chatted for a while, sharing information about chocolate and

sweetness.

Then I went on to the Italian vendor with the packaged pastas, sauces, vegetables and more. I asked "Which require heating?" and "Which could just be eaten?" Only one option was ready to eat, but I didn't buy it.

The market closed quickly at 11 a.m., surprising me, but then I realized it had opened at 5 a.m.

As this market closed for the day, I thought back over to my favorite market that shuttered for the season and I asked myself if this new market would be a good substitute? Probably not.

I continue to search for a market that is convenient.

Jerry W. sells Street Sense in northern Virginia and attends the Street Sense writers group every week.

WHAT OUR READERS ARE SAYING...

Focus on "Critical Needs" Not "Primary Causes"

Dear Street Sense Editor:

In the article, "Public Perceptions Don't Match Reality," in the November 28th issue, you feature part of a Gallup survey on homelessness in America. The reported responses indicate that the American public believes that the primary causes of homelessness in America are drug and alcohol abuse (26%), mental illness and related disabilities (21%), job loss and unemployment (18%), insufficient income (8%), etc.

Those responses were contrasted to claims that studies identify the lack of affordable housing as the true cause of homelessness. The executive director of the National Coalition for the Homeless is quoted as declaring that "Americans who believe wrongly that homeless people are on the streets because of alcohol and drugs are further reinforcing stereotypes, and we need to work on changing that."

Certainly educating the public is important – with respect to both preventive measures and mitigation. But the "reality gap" highlighted in the article may not be as great as the quoted responses (to Question Five of the survey) imply.

Question Four in the survey provided a list of 11 factors and said "please tell me if this is a major reason why people might be homeless, a minor reason, or not a reason for homelessness." The top ranked answers were (1) Drugs/alcohol abuse (85% major, 13% minor: 98% total), (2) Mental illness/post traumatic stress disorder (67% major, 28% minor: 95% total) (3) Insufficient income (67% major, 27% minor: 94% total), (4) Job loss/unemployment (65% major, 29% minor: 94% total). The response "unable to find affordable housing" was seen by 48% of the respondents as a major reason and 42% as a contributing minor reason (90% total).

So, when asked a nuanced question, the public appears to see homelessness as a multi-factor problem – with income, employment and affordable housing very much in the mix.

But then Question Five eliminated any nuances by asking respondents which of the 11 factors "do you believe is the primary cause of homelessness today?" And since the survey did not offer a definition of "homeless," answers had to be based on whatever "homeless" meant to each respondent.

I'd guess that the average woman in the

street probably doesn't make the distinction between "homeless" and "chronically homeless" that researchers, advocates and service providers do. Most people likely identify the folks they see begging for spare change or sleeping in doorways and on heating grates as their definition of "homeless." They probably don't visit day centers or meet homeless workers at local construction sites. They do read about mortgage problems, know people who are experiencing tough economic times, are aware of housing costs, oil prices, etc.

So, if asked a nuanced question, they can give a nuanced answer. But, if directed to pick the "primary cause," they likely draw on their personal experience – and thus their answers are probably heavily weighted toward the more visible chronically homeless. So, when Gallup asked about the homeless, respondents answered about the more visible chronically homeless.

In the literature on the chronically homeless, alcohol, drugs and mental illness are indeed key issues. I won't say "primary cause" because homelessness has, like all resource allocation issues, a supply-side (housing) and a demand side (disposable income) – both of which have their own complexity. Asking

about a single "primary cause" introduces a misleading simplicity. And in the absence of a clear distinction between "homeless" and "chronic homeless," misunderstanding is virtually guaranteed.

Addressing chronic homelessness – and particularly the need for permanent supportive housing for those with mental health and addiction problems – has, in many ways, become a major focus of homelessness policy. Even if alcohol and drug addiction and mental illness aren't the primary cause (whatever that may mean), they are important factors in chronic homelessness.

Writing off the public perception of the importance of mental health and addiction issues as mere misguided stereotyping may not prove useful – especially when the public has a more nuanced set of opinions than that. Perhaps a more productive approach would be to focus the conversation on the critical needs of the homeless rather than debate "primary causes."

Many of the other survey responses suggest that the public is sympathetic to helping address those critical needs.

- Bob Blair

VendorNotes

By Laura Thompson Osuri

Lee's Cooking

Street Sense congratulates vendor **Lee Mayse** for landing a job in the kitchen at the **National Institute of Health (NIH)** in Rockville. He is currently part of the **D.C. Central Kitchen Culinary Arts Training Program** and interned at NIH this fall. Once he graduates from the program in mid-January, he will begin his work at NIH in the mornings and afternoons.

Lee is thrilled to have a new job lined up and gives credit to his intense training as well as the grace of God.

Still, Lee is looking for evening employment in the restaurant industry. If anyone might know of a job along these lines, please contact him directly at (202) 210-1895.

Mary's New Home

I am happy to report that vendor **Mary Wanyama** has moved out of the shelter into a new transitional housing thanks to the **Community Council for the Homeless at Friendship Place**.

Mary said that she loves her new space located in a church near Tenleytown. She described how quiet and clean it is and how it really does "feel like a home."

Holiday Goodwill

The vendors at Street Sense thank all their customers for their generosity during the holiday season.

Vendors have reported customers buying them coffee and lunch during the last few weeks. Some vendors have even received random sets of hats and gloves. And at least three vendors reported getting donations of \$50 each!

Thank you for your kindness and donations. And remember, if you wish to make a donation to a specific vendor and want to have it tax-exempt, please fill out the donation form on page 3, and make sure to note on the form and on the memo line of the check what you want the donation to go to.

Street Sense Holiday Party

On Dec. 21, Street Sense had its third annual holiday

party, complete with presents, Christmas music, good food and lots of fun.

About 40 vendors attended along with a few board members and a dozen volunteers. Everyone ate some good food from Fresh Start Catering and shared laughs and smiles



Vendors Patty Smith, Martin Walker, and Jeffery McNeill enjoy some pot roast and potatoes at the holiday party.

talking about the past year

All of the vendors at the party also received personally selected gift that given to them by one of our volunteers. Gifts ranged from coats to Walkmans to sweaters to watches. And while many vendors opened their presents at the party, several took them home to have something to unwrap on Christmas day.

I just wanted to personally thank **Mary Cunningham** and the staff of the **National Alliance to End Homelessness** for stepping up at the last minute and adopting the last seven vendors. And I also wanted to thank **Becky Thompson** (my mom) for donating 14 pairs of boots in various sizes that were raffled off to the vendors. And thanks to all the other volunteers who adopted vendors.

Because of all this generosity, the holiday season was made a little more special for our vendors, many of whom have no family of their own to celebrate with during this time of year.

INTERN INSIGHT By Melanie Lidman

Final Thoughts



When I first walked into the Street Sense office, I spent most of the first day talking with Jesse Smith, who was the vendor manager. He gave me a tour of the office (the one room didn't take much to time to see), the Church of the Epiphany building and a run down of the ins and outs of the organization. About an hour into my first day, Jesse nonchalantly began a sentence, "Well, when I was homeless..."

I'm terrible at hiding emotions on my face, and I'm sure Jesse caught my look of surprise. Jesse, homeless? He was articulate, well dressed, had a bachelors and most of a master's degree from the University of Maryland in some sort of computer engineering. I was incredulous: Jesse was homeless?

He then proceeded to tell me how he became homeless. He shared some rough times in his life and told me how he came back to reality: as one of the chief organizers of the Committee to Save Franklin Shelter. He told me how a group of homeless guys managed to beat one of the city's most formidable developers to save the men's emergency shelter.

It is in moments like that when you realize how ignorant you are. It was moments like these that characterized my time at Street Sense.

Six months ago, I probably would have laughed if I heard the term "homeless community." How could a bunch of drunk, dirty bums form a community?

I've been struck by how people who are homeless, who are really in the depths of poverty and depression, band together to help each other out when they have barely anything themselves.

When one of our vendors had his bag stolen (a common occurrence among homeless people, who must carry everything with them at all times), one of our other vendors donated 20 papers she earned from working a shift at the office to him. Certainly this vendor could have used the 20 papers herself, but she knew that they would really help the other vendor get back on his feet and maybe lift his spirits a little bit.

Writing about homelessness and poverty all the time is important, but it can be difficult. Even when I wrote about success stories, I knew that the numbers of poor and homeless people in our area and across the country continue to increase. Some days, I would walk back to the metro depressed, because there seems to be no end in sight.

But there were also some days when I would practically skip home, feeling hopeful and amazed at the sheer tenacity of the human spirit and what people can overcome. There was also the indescribable feeling of knowing you are helping someone out of homelessness.

Homeless individuals, just like anyone, have a lot to say. They just need someone to listen. I have been fortunate enough to be that person. In my time at Street Sense, I've gained a small window into their world, hearing stories and seeing the day-to-day struggles of people desperately trying to overcome homelessness.

I know I will never look at a homeless person the same way again. Now, when I see someone asking for money on the street, I don't just see that person. I see a whole society around them that has failed: jobs that pay too low and rents that are too high, medical emergencies that happened between insurance coverage in a health system that doesn't work.

I see broken hearts that truly tore into people's souls, the debilitating struggle with mental illness that I can't even begin to understand. But most importantly, I see them. I don't ignore them. Maybe I give money, maybe I don't, but I always smile.

Get Street Sense Each Month Delivered Right to Your Door Every Other Week!

Do you want to continue to support Street Sense throughout the year?
Order a subscription today.

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

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Please make checks payable to Street Sense.
Mail to: Street Sense, 1317 G St. NW, Washington, DC 20005.

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

DC Village (Family)
2-A DC Village Lane, SW
(202) 561-8090
www.dccfh.org/DCVillage.html

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

FOOD

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

MEDICAL RESOURCES

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

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

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

OUTREACH CENTERS

Bread for the City
1525 Seventh Street, NW
(202) 265-2400 AND
1640 Good Hope Road, SE
(202) 561-8587
www.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 and mentoring, education, youth services, clothing

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

Martha's Table
2114 14th Street, NW
(202) 328-6608

www.marthastable.org
dinner, education, recreation, clothing, child and family services

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

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

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

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

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

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

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

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

Foundry Methodist Church
1500 16th Street, NW
(202) 332-4010
www.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

Hypothermia Hotline: 1-800-535-7252

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

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

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

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

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

MARYLAND

SHELTER

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

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

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

FOOD

Bethesda Cares
7728 Woodmont Church, Bethesda
(301) 907-9244
www.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 services, employment services, HIV/AIDS services

PHOTO FINISH

Remembering

By Laura Thompson Osuri



On Dec. 21, the longest night of the year, the National Coalition for the Homeless sponsored D.C.'s annual Homeless Memorial Day. About 70 people attended the ceremony held in McPherson Square. Dozens of other memorial days were held elsewhere in the country. In D.C. alone, 107 homeless people died in 2007.

StreetFact

Washington, D.C., has the largest racial "fat gap" in the nation with an 8% obesity rate for whites and a 31% rate for blacks. (For more info see the story on page 5.)

SOURCE: VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY

Remember we come out every other Wednesday. Look for the next issue January 9.

December 27, 2007 - January 8, 2008 • Volume 5 • Issue 4

Street Sense
1317 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005

Mail To:

Interested in a subscription? Go to page 14 for more information.

VENDOR PROFILE

Dennis Rutledge

Dennis Rutledge was born in suburban Alabama on Sept. 15, 1960, and grew up the seventh out of nine children. He described his childhood as "warm" and said his favorite memories were fishing with his father.

After graduating from high school, Dennis moved to Miami to live with his sister and worked as a custodian. Following a brief stay back in Birmingham, he decided to go to D.C. with his oldest brother.

In D.C. Dennis ended up at his favorite job as a supply technician for Children's Hospital. For seven years Dennis worked on the trauma team and helped out in the emergency room. During his free time Dennis would jog all over the city. "Jogging just frees your mind and it relieves stress," he said. "Its like I'm flying like an eagle."

While in Washington, he also met a woman and had two daughters with her. But when things did not work out, he moved back to Birmingham. Dennis said he still stayed involved in his daughters' lives and visited them and often took them to Alabama.

In Birmingham, Dennis worked as a boxcar factory worker, a hospital supply technician and a furniture deliveryman. However, all of Dennis' hard labor and his love of sports took a toll on his body and he developed arthritis and had to quit the furniture delivery job. But shortly after quitting, he started collecting disability compensation from the government.

Dennis came back to D.C. in May 2007 to watch his daughter, Denisha, graduate from Hampton University. He decided to stay to spend more time with his daughters.

After going through a 90 day alcohol rehabilitation program, Dennis is now living in transitional housing and is looking for a SRO (single room occupancy) or cheap room to rent.



How did you become homeless?

When I came to D.C., I spent lots of money on my daughters, so I did not have enough money to get my own place. I thought I could stay in the shelter for three months and save up to get a place, but that was not the case. I ended up drinking a lot and doing other bad stuff.

Why do you sell Street Sense?

Because of the beautiful people that give you encouragement and smiles. I never knew people could be so warm and caring until I came to Street Sense.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

I have an entrepreneurial spirit in me, so in five year, I would like to have my own lawn service, and also volunteer with elderly and kids so I can give back all the encouragement and love I was given.

Favorite movie?

"Fallen." It keeps me on my Ps and Qs as far as spirituality goes. I also love all Disney cartoons, especially "Aladdin."

Favorite music?

I love all music – jazz, country, classical – but gospel is my favorite.

Favorite food?

Fish, especially those you catch yourself.

Favorite book?

The Bible. It's the book of all books.

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

Street Sense is part of the Combined Federal Campaign. Please include us in your CFC recipient list.

CFC#
28233

