



# THE GREENSBORO VOICE

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PRINTING NEWS THAT DOESN'T FIT

SUMMER 2013

## Fred Gant: A look into an artist's mind

By Joe Smith



Fred Gant

*The following is an interview with Fred Gant, a member of the newly formed Artists Group at the Interactive Resource Center (IRC). In the article, he will give us a glimpse into the creative mind of an artist.*

### My inspiration

Recently I've been doing my work in mixed media. People call my work 'painting' but I think they are misinterpreting what I am doing. When I describe my work I am not going to say that it is just paint. I'm not going to just tell you that is pencil and paint; there is some magic marker in there. There's color pencil in there, there's paint, there's any other thing I could grab. There is crayon in there and couldn't even tell you where I used it. They call it a 'painting' but I want them to know it's a lot of things.

I do like to use a pencil when I sketch as this keeps art on a manageable level of technology. You can always have a pencil with you.

My inspiration comes to me in through subliminal thinking. It's like a magical thing. After I start a piece I like how my mind congeals with it. I might go and handle some things, answer the phone or something. Then when I come back and look at it again it has another edge, another dimension.

Sometimes I do a piece and when I see it again my feelings resurface. I can see the skill in a way that's to my liking. I realize I did something. Sometimes I only know it's good through the reactions of people when they see it.

My feelings bubble up. I know I felt something when I did it. Then someone else says Whoa! They tell me how much they like it. That's my art - and I then wonder what they see. "Wow you like that, and, I don't know, it's just fun."

I think with my "Art Mind" most of the time. It's kind of crazy because you'll see in a set way for a while and then you'll want to do something different. I don't want to be redundant; I don't want to do that again so I try to cast previous work out of my mind. I stop thinking I am going to redo stuff and just do it for the fun. I wouldn't just do it because I look at it so much, that's not the thing.

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## Greensboro Homeless Day

By Zakeya Mitchell, Reporter



photo: Zakeya Mitchell

The Remnant Seekers Incorporated, a local religious non-profit organization aimed to aid the homeless population, sponsored an event at Center City Park in Greensboro, North Carolina called *Greensboro Homeless Day*. Opened to the public, the event served as an opportunity to "demonstrate love to the designated population, allow God's presence to inhabit receptive hearts and give to those less fortunate." - Evangelist Patricia Daboh, the founder of Remnant Seekers Incorporated, briefly said, before returning to oversee the function.

Before this event Remnant Seekers Inc. conducted similar acts of kindness at their church for the last year. Serving the homeless food and providing spiritual inspiration, biblical teachings and an opportunity to socialize every fourth Sunday of the month. Greensboro Homeless Day is actually their first major community event! With a great turn out! Over 250 people showed up in support of the event with much help from other surrounding non-profit, profit and church organizations.

When Evang. Patricia Daboh was asked how she expected this event to affect change in the homeless population, her reply was "to show them that someone will go above and beyond to make a difference in their lives, even for just one day." The event could not have been more of a success. The presiding organization constructed a program of worship and entertainment for the people. Several individuals from the homeless community showcased their talent and gave

inspirational anecdotes about their individual experience with homelessness. A gentleman named Donald Miller recited an original poem entitled *My Shopping Cart is Full*. His poignant story touched the hearts of many as they affirmed his words through attentiveness and positive nonverbal communication.

Singing artists from the church all the way to artists afflicted with homelessness performed for their fellow audience. One in particular named James Sheptock is a gospel singer and song writer, who is also homeless. However, he does not allow his situation to deteriorate his passion for sharing how much he has to be grateful for. As he left the stage a woman ran after to him to express how thankful she was that he shared gifts with everyone. A beautiful sight to behold as they shared a brief conversation about how he finds his inspiration.

Not only was there entertainment, Remnant Seekers Inc. also provided a hot meal and beverages for everyone and prizes for the individuals whose raffle ticket was pulled. They ended the evening with a prayer, thanking everyone for their support and contributions to the event.

Over all the event was a success and the Remnant Seekers are planning to do bigger things in the following years to come. When asked if this event would become something annual, Daboh said "Expect a Block party or a Jamming for Jesus Social!"

By the looks on the faces of the people that attended, this may be something they would support for many years to come.

## Homelessness Poem

*By Zakeya Mitchell*

Hypothetically speaking, if

Poverty is an institution

Created to perpetuate the illusion that equality is fair game

And everyone has identical exposure to opportunities but

Its' circumstance and motivation that aren't the same

Would you change your mind about what you deserve?

Let public opinion deceive you into believing that you're a degenerate statistic and only want people to hand you a second chance without so much as a broken back to prove you're willing to work for it

How much would it take to convince you?

That you aren't worth the ground you sleep on, that others will not go out of their way

and that any government assistance that is available is locked away, waiting for someone who isn't a felon

But your caseworker never bothered to ask you,

because if he had,

you would have told him that you only did it because you had too,

Palms covered in Band-Aids from attempting to pull yourself out of the hole you dug yourself into, and you'll admit to it, because you're not exempt from making mistakes but sometimes all it takes is someone considerate,

With a listening ear

Look at him without fear, like a person and not a liability, he is not your property used to accrue the wealth that you'll only share for tax write offs in late May

he is your

Local Neighborhood Street wonderer

The man that your daughter stares at as you clinch her hand tighter when you walk by without eye contact because your guilt would compel you to do something because we are built that way, ignoring it only allows our hearts to decay

Because it is in all of us to make our arms parallel to the ground and reach out when we see tears fall from wounded eyes

But the media has left us deprived of perspective. It's merely a hypothetical of course

Just some thoughts my mind wondered by when I bought a guy a subway sandwich and he told me he couldn't work because no one would hire him because he had an enlarged heart and 1 lung

That he served in Vietnam twice and that he had been waiting on his disability for the last 3 years, subjected to the life of a caveman living in the woods while sleeping in a hut built of what he could find behind the rest of us, his dreams have been repressed to simply wanting clean water

I'm just saying ya'll, I realized

Every conclusion I drew, was based on an invalid presumption about something someone didn't understand

And I didn't bother to ask any questions and like you never reach out my hand

Left me to believe that this generalized group of people all thought the same way when in fact none of us are all the same, everyone is an individual and everyone has a different story, what we all have in common is pain

And I guess that's why this is just a hypothetically, because I know if this was true we would do so much better than allow ourselves to slowly unglue the intimate fibers that keep us humble

The simplicity of love can be overwhelming sometimes and I know

That we are not that indifferent to each other's struggle, because if we were, this poem wouldn't be a hypothetical

And all of the things you've been deprived of is" for your own good" because you lack social status because the fact is that you

Have a background.

## Glenwood Branch Library

*By Vincent Smith, Reporter*

Libraries around Greensboro provide great resources that help to expand the mind, touch the heart, and inspire the imagination. Children and adults alike can benefit from the books and films that fill the shelves. However, the resources found on the shelves represent only part of the educational opportunities available for the public in Greensboro's libraries. For the Glenwood Branch library, located on Florida Street near the Greensboro Coliseum, classes and specialized resources give a unique opportunity for individuals to grow and learn.

The Glenwood Branch library houses the Multicultural Resource Center in Greensboro. This offers many materials for those who wish to learn and expand their knowledge and understanding of other languages. Language materials, such as books, films, and audio CDs, provide a variety of options for learning.

Also, the Glenwood library offers opportunities for people to learn and gain a better understanding of the English language. Specifically, the library offers classes such as the Introduction to English classes, designed for beginning learners, as well as the English Conversation Club, which helps with developing speaking skills in a more everyday environment. Also, the computer lab offers specific software which provides the opportunity for individuals to work and learn skills on their own, but also to have assistance if necessary.

All of these services are free and available thanks to the help of volunteers who give of their time to help others. The Glenwood Branch library provides unique resources to the diverse language communities in Greensboro. With such a wealth of information and a variety of classes and materials, individuals within this city have the opportunity to grow and develop language skills. For those interested in gaining more information about classes or those willing to volunteer, contact the Glenwood Library at 336-297-5000. The librarians there would be more than willing to help and get you connected.



## Whitt's Up With Social Security?

By Melissa Whitt



### Am I eligible for social security disability benefits?

To be eligible for Social Security Disability benefits, you must have a single medical condition or a combination of medical conditions that reach the severity of keeping you from engaging in substantial gainful employment for a period of at least one full calendar year of that is expected to keep you from working for at least one full calendar year. This statement can be confusing to many since it can mislead a disabled person to think they must wait a year to apply for benefits. That assumption is incorrect. The example I use is a man that has recently suffered a heart attack would be eligible to file a claim for disability because his heart condition is severe enough to keep him out of work for at least one year. This example involves one single condition that could be deemed disabling. Another example would be a woman who has a combination of impairments that include knee problems, back pain, migraines and diabetes. She would qualify for disability because she has a combination of impairments which would keep her out of work for at least a year.

### Am I eligible for Supplemental Security income benefits?

The Supplemental Security Income program is needs based and requires that a claimant meets two eligibility requirements. A claimant must prove disability as defined above but the difference is that in addition to being disabled, a claimant must show that they fall below the resource limit to draw benefits. By resources, I mean that an individual cannot exceed \$2000 in combined resources from all sources and for a couple the limit is \$3000 from all sources. If a person meets the medical disability requirement they must also meet the non-medical or resource requirements to be eligible for SSI benefits. The maximum benefit that a person can draw from SSI sources is \$710 a month. This amount will be reduced as resource amounts change. Medicaid will be provided to the claimant for as long as they draw Supplemental Security Income benefits.

THE GREENSBORO VOICE [www.greensborovoice.org](http://www.greensborovoice.org)

### Mission Statement

Our newspaper aims to serve as a vehicle for elevating voices and public discussion on issues that are not frequently covered in mainstream media outlets. These issues include homelessness, facing potential homelessness and the resources available to help those in need. This newspaper is for everyone: people experiencing homelessness, students, parents and anyone else who wants to have his or her voice heard. We hope the awareness gained from our newspaper will encourage the community to have a discussion about issues and people who are normally ignored.

### Join Our Team

Members of Greensboro's community who want to end poverty and homelessness publish The Greensboro Voice. We welcome you to our team! Meetings are held at the Interactive Resource Center on Fridays from 1:00–3:00 p.m. The Interactive Resource Center is located at 407 E. Washington Street. Everyone is welcome at our meetings!

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## The IRC'S Trailways Housing Program Presents The IRC Housing Clinic

By Jermaine Zigler, Staff Reporter

The IRC Housing Clinic specializes in serving those with low income, evictions, foreclosures, criminal backgrounds and poor credit. Its' mission is to help individuals and families find safe and affordable housing to meet their current budget and needs. The Clinic believes that every human being deserves to have adequate housing, no matter what their background entails. The Clinic promises to value and respect the uniqueness and diversity of all individuals and to keep the consultation and your records confidential. We also will refer you to other agencies when and if it is necessary.

The overall purpose of the Housing Clinic is to provide a healing place in a professional environment. We create this environment for the clients we serve by using the model of the medical clinic. We understand that the effect of unexpected homelessness can be overwhelming and it can give a person a sense of hopelessness, worthlessness, and loneliness. We want our clients to feel comfort in knowing that we are concerned about their situation and that we will walk them through the healing process. Our housing department depends on volunteers and interns to efficiently provide service for our clients. We call these volunteers and interns "housing specialists."

Teresa Hicks is the head of Trailways Housing Program and answered these questions in a conversation with staff reporter, Jermaine Zigler:

### What led you to the Interactive Resource Center to work as a Housing Specialist?

*I was on the Task Force that was planning a day center for those experiencing homelessness. And I was also volunteering at the HIVE by cooking meals for those who were experiencing homelessness. While there, I assisted the homeless in finding housing. When the Interactive Resource Center opened at the Bessemer Ave. location, I founded Trailways Housing Services there in 2010. I saw a need to help the neglected, rejected, and unprotected citizen in our community who were experiencing homelessness find a better place to stay rather than sleeping outside in the elements.*

### How do you feel when one of your clients receives housing?

*I get excited because I feel that a miracle has just taken place.*

## A Place Where I Belong

By Anita Gilmore, Roving Reporter



Photo: Suzanne Bringham

I am at the Interactive Resource Center (IRC) where all of you are present. We are a variety of colors, shapes sizes and cultures. The smells of tobacco, food, coffee, burned popcorn, laundry detergent, Clorox, underarm odor, spray disinfectant and perfume are in the air. The sounds of cell phones ringing, Ms. Jane saying, "Put them on vibrate," along with laughter, crying, moaning, complaining heard against the PA system paging someone to the front desk. A variety of programs going on: job searching, resume writing, computing skills, GED testing as well as and services being offered: laundry being done, showers taken, hair being cut. A variety of socializing going on: card playing, chess playing, newspaper reading. And then the announcement, "The IRC will be closing in fifteen minutes, signaling the end of our day together."



## Putting Ourselves Out Of Business

(Interview with Will Howard - IRC Assistant Administrative Director)

As told to Joe Smith - Reporter for Greensboro Voice

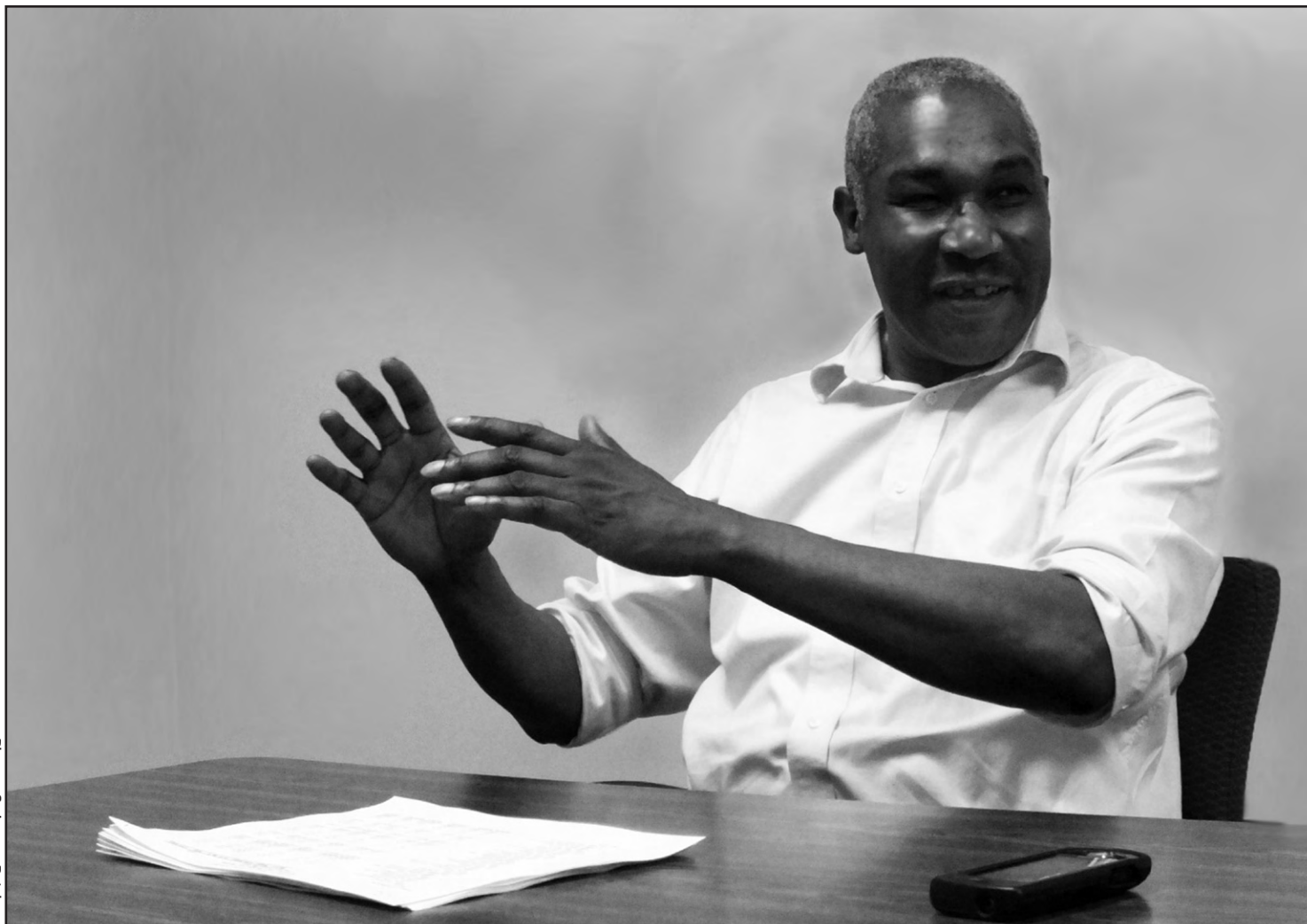


Photo: Suzanne Bringham

I was born in Georgia, and went to the University of Georgia. I started a graphics career after college and was in the printing industry for 25 years. I advanced to positions as a Production Manager, Customer Service Manager, and then Plant Superintendent.

### New Orleans

I was in New Orleans during Hurricane Katrina working at a printing plant. Because of Katrina, I lost my house and became homeless.

I left the state but soon returned to New Orleans and stayed at Saint Mary's Elementary School run by a group called Common Ground. I worked with a group who provided medical services for displaced people. I became good friends with Brandon Darby, the head of Common Ground.

After the hurricane, the state government of Louisiana passed a law allowing the government to step in and claim people's property. They put notices on the houses saying, "for safety reasons", if the owners didn't come back and claim their houses within 30 to 60 days, the owner would lose it. It was disturbing that people could be forced out of their home by a hurricane and their government could seize their property.

Common Ground asked students from universities all around the country to come and help gut-out houses and board them up to save the homes so the state would not seize the homes. My philosophy has always been hands-on-work has got to be done, but if you can manage the effort you're going to get a lot more done. I was willing to be there for a while.

### People in Despair

I gained an understanding of the plight of people in despair. This consumed me to the point where it didn't matter if I was getting paid or not. It didn't matter if I was spending my own money to keep it going. What mattered was to get these houses boarded up so the City couldn't take them. I did it for so long, so intensely, that I forgot I didn't get full retirement. I was spending more than I had.

### Greensboro

I wanted to go back to working for a regular job after about two years. Technology had advanced in my industry and jobs were few and far between. I relocated to Greensboro to work for Avery Dennison, a large printing company.

While I was waiting to start Avery put on a hiring freeze so I never got hired. I decided to stay in Greensboro for a while and look around to see what I could find but I was not successful. After that my laptop broke. I went to the library and used their computers. Then somebody told me about the IRC on Bessemer Avenue.

### Coming to the IRC

In my previous career I was known making a profit for the company that paid my salary. If a plant owned by my company wasn't making money there's a good chance my name was on a short list to head there soon.

What we did at Common Ground in Louisiana and what we do at the IRC is very different from the printing business. I tried to keep the IRC from being a make shift agency. For a long time the staff fought over use of a single little printer. Money was very limited for janitorial supplies and paper towels and toilet paper. When we ran out, we went to Dollar General. I don't have a tolerance for working that way.

As a volunteer I probably had more authority than the rest of the staff. I changed a lot

of the policy. The IRC was just going to fall apart if things continued the way they were. I'm not a wait and see kind of person. I'm either all in or all out; there is no middle of the road. They listened to me and gave me a lead position and let me act on my ideas.

What I did in the early days at Bessemer helped pave the way for the new IRC. We worked hard on policy and security. When the decision was made to renovate the new IRC building I used the old IRC as a place to train staff. Once we got downtown we were going to be under a lot of scrutiny and be easy access to everyone. We were going to be busier than we ever.

### The New IRC

In 2009 we opened up the day center so people leaving the WE shelters at night had a place to go in the daytime. This gave them a permanent place to work on a plan, to elevate them out of needing a shelter.

### IRC Staff

We have an aging staff. We don't have a retirement package, no retirement fund. One of my priorities is to help insure they get a plan this year. Something in the revenue stream has got to change.

### Social Workers

I plan to put social workers in our building. When we get someone who is angry or is sitting non-responsively the social worker will be right there. We can do this in-house. I don't want social workers isolated in an office waiting for someone to come see them. They need to be in the Employment Department, the Nursing Department, the Housing Department, etc.

We're going to have someone sit down and talk with clients on a professional basis. That's a priority here and now. This fall Molly Wells, who has a Masters in Social Work will be at the IRC one day a week. We need more volunteer social workers.

### Government Relations

I am proud of the relationship I formed with councilperson Nancy Vaughan. I'd like to think Nancy and I changed each other's views about at risk and homeless people. Our relationship and what we've been able to do in supporting each other has had a profound impact on what you see at the IRC.

I enjoy seriously assisting people to exit chronic homelessness and keeping the ones that are homeless from entering chronic homelessness. People in city government like Robbie Perkins, Nancy Vaughan, Jim Key, and former Public Commissioner

Paul Gibson have always stood with me - all the way down the line.

#### When You Don't Have an Answer

A lot of people ask me; aren't you under a lot of pressure with all you are doing? I don't like pressure. Pressure only occurs when you don't know what you are doing. Once you know what you're doing there's no pressure. It's just a lot of work.

People come in late in the day and say to me, "Hey, I've got to find a place to sleep tonight. All the shelters are full". It could be a woman with two little kids. I don't feel pressure because I know how this is going to work out. I'm going to get out the IRC credit card and put them up in a hotel for a couple of nights until we find a better shelter for them.

#### Jobs, Jobs, Jobs!

We have this job thing figured out. We're setting up our own temporary staffing agency. People want a chance to do for themselves. Our clients who have a criminal history can't be ignored anymore. They made a bad decision in their past, paid for it with prison time and now they are out on the street and looking for a helping hand to restart their lives in a different direction. Before they get a chance to explain their plan for a new life they are arbitrarily dismissed.

The staffing agency we are creating will allow me to say to this ex-offender, "I've got a job here that you can't even apply for unless you ARE an ex-offender. Some jobs are set up strictly for people who do not have a high school diploma or GED. I want to be able to say to our ex-offender, "I'm going to get you work, but you have to get into the GED program and stay there. I promise if you stay and you're trying, I'm going to keep you working."

Having the staffing agency will allow me to say to ex-offenders, "Listen, I partnered with some employers that are willing to take a chance on you. We're going to keep you in there". If they stay clean, if they practice their computer skills, and diligently work on their GED, they will get a job. Sure, a lot of them are going to fall short. We have the infrastructure in this building to put them "back together again".

They might have to see the mental health nurse when they enter this program. We're going to help them on their way back. On their way back they will be better than before. A lot of us failed a couple of times before we got it worked out. We were not denied the chance to be successful once and we decided we were ready to try it again.

I'm hoping to open this temporary staffing agency this year on a limited basis. I've looked for ways to say to people; hang in there. Help is on the way. It's tough to keep believing when they have heard this for 15 years and nothing has happened. You have to show them something. I strongly believe our new staffing agency is going to have such a positive impact on our clients that people are going to come running to get into the program. Other agencies have done similar things with great success.

It comes down to this: a person walks through that door and walks up to the desk for the first time. They ask for help with a food voucher, a pair of shoes, a clothing voucher, to get into a rehab center, or to get a bus pass. I believe with all my heart if they could get all of these things for themselves they would. If it was as easy for them to get work as it is to get a voucher they would take the work every single time.

We can put ourselves out of business. Some people tell me you're not going to do this in 3 years, you're not going to do that for 5 years. I'll prove them wrong.

The Temp agency trend is coming. Companies don't want to sit across from somebody and explain why they are cutting hours from 40 to 27 or why there are no benefits and no raises. They don't want to say I really wish I didn't have to let you go, then have the employee tell you about their kids.

Companies will be able to call the IRC and say send me 5 or 6 people and a contract and I'll send you a check when the job is done. At any given time that company can say don't send anymore and we will try to have other contract work ready for our clients. I want our people to be ready. This evolution in the economy is coming and anybody that thinks it's not is dead wrong.

#### What God Wants Us to Do

God wants all of us to stand up and start helping ourselves. Everybody can be forgiven for their discretions, but God has shown that he can grow tired with us. He wants us to do better.

**Note:** This interview only covers a few of the many projects Will and the IRC are working on. I, Joe Smith am a Staff Reporter for the Greensboro Voice and formerly worked in the Nuclear Utilities as both an operator and instructor in locations around the country. Locally I was employed in Southport N.C. for CP&L and provided some benchmark 'Best Practices' to Duke Power.

## The Importance of Education

By Akita Gilmore

The late Malcolm X once said, "Education is our passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today." The importance of education is significant. It not only instills knowledge, it teaches us the fundamentals of how to apply that knowledge with influence, inspiration, and courage. Though education in life occurs in a variety of ways, one of the most important is in the academic setting. A good academic education will help us throughout our life, opening doors, encouraging us to reach new horizons, and inspire passion in our heart if we dare to take on its intellectual challenges. We teach each other many different things but getting a good academic education teaches us dedication, organization, discipline, ethics, and patience.

Education has no limitations. It has no cut off dates or ending. It is never too late to learn and we are never too old to be taught. Furthermore, if we continue to seek being educated in every way possible, it will most certainly pay off in all aspect of our lives.

As I graduated Cum Laude two weeks ago from Herzing University in Atlanta, GA, with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Administration, along with a Concentration in Business Management, I felt blessed and honored to be in the mist of all my colleagues as we walked across the stage to get our degrees. I knew right then and there I could do anything I put my mind to. Going to school helped me to become

self-sufficient, respectful, grateful, and powerful - all attributes which can never be taken away. I faced so many challenges during those years in college, but it paid off in the end.

So remember, the hard work you put in will not go unnoticed, and you will be able to appreciate hard work and become a productive member of society knowing there is nothing you can't do.

I want to leave you with three important words, "I made it!" If you remember those three words you will stay encouraged and motivated, because if you believe you can make it you will. Keep it as your mission statement; believe in yourself and watch your light get brighter, and your future get more prosperous no matter what level you are at.

I would like to thank God, the IRC, and my mother Anita Gilmore, who inspired and constantly pushed me to get back in school. I would also like to thank Velma Pope and Betty Gyles, Dr. Angela Primm-Bethea, Nannette Camacho, Stephanie Gunby, Dr. Dennis Morrow, Dr. Amy Lynn Hess, Dr. Cheryl McKinley, Dr. Steven Shema, Dr. Christella Hogan, Dr. Gary Hanney of Herzing University, and Dr. Godwin, of Voorhees College. These professors and leaders helped shape and encourage the mind and character of who I have become, and without them leading, teaching, and guiding me in their classrooms, I wouldn't be as successful as I am today.

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Please send checks payable to "The Greensboro Voice" to our new address:  
Greensboro Voice  
1852 Banking Street #9252  
Greensboro NC 27408





People and Dog

*"This is something out of my imagination and I kept going with it. I was some kind of pleased with the final look of it".*

## Fred Gant: A look into an artist's mind

Continued from page 1

### Becoming an Artist (the Bobcat)

My older brother was my inspiration and as far as I know he was the reason I started drawing.

I was so young. I can't give an age but it was when I came in contact with my art teacher in middle school that I began to identify with being an artist. She took a liking to my art in such a way that I felt something. It was a special feeling.

When I got to middle school they had a mascot contest to see who could draw the Bobcat. I felt that was interesting. The short of this story was that I won the contest. When I came into school every day that year I could see the flag hanging high upstairs with the Bobcat standing there. That had a big impact on me because I was so young.

In high school I couldn't forget about that Bobcat. I had gained more friends from my reputation of being imaginative in middle school, and that helped keep that spirit alive.

### The Art Spirit

In school I was known as the 'Creator Person'. It wasn't only art - it was other things that I would get into. I could see it in my mind, it was swirling away. I would render drawings and people would kind of gravitate to them,

or like them in a way. It was not a regular liking thing; it was a "Spikey" thing.

My "art spirit" was overwhelming. It was like somebody I had never talked too. We hadn't engaged in conversation or anything. We seemed to quite frequently see each other. You see a familiar person and you do your painting and the painting breaks a boundary. They want to meet you. You do the piece and you think, "Wow this is not a normal day". That heightened my senses and got me in touch with the feelings.

I worked with a guy who was doing hands. He got good at it. Then he didn't want to do anything else. I can feel myself getting into that mode. A hand is a work of art. It has an expression all its own and even if you didn't know it you could see the hands are saying something. A hand's gesture talks to you, it says many things. You don't have to "Dumify" a hand to know how to render it.

I analyze my own thoughts. I will be setting there drawing, and I look at that hand and think that hand is in a crazy manner but I can do it. Just like you can make that eye and that ear, you have to try to render that hand right there.

When I make a piece I want to 'juice it up' and have fun with it.



My Commerical

*"This is my commercial. I used colored pencils, markers and white out on a cardboard box I found on the curb. I use the FedEx box like a pocket—it helps me carry my art even when riding my bicycle. It is a portrait of myself—I threw an 'R' into the FedEx Lettering to make it read 'FredEx'."*





Rhonda and Rickey

*"Rhonda and Rickey are my good friends and they inspire me. They have so much love for each other. I made this piece of art to give as a gift to them on their birthdays."*

### Introspection

My thoughts are my strong strength. I have doubted myself at times. I know a thought can be a brick wall. I might think to myself, "Wow another hand. I'm not going to be able to do it." In the past I have cast stuff out of the paper that I didn't think I could do. I try to throw out those thoughts now because nothing is impossible. You know it's only paper.

Back in the day I was sometimes dumb-founded about what I thought I could do. Somebody said they liked my art but I thought, "Wow, am I going to be an artist 15 years from now?" But I was picking out things on that blank piece of paper. I was making it rise and everything. If I ever looked at that paper and said, "Two more eyes, I can't get those eyes right", if I had ever done that, I would have really been putting my foot in my mouth. Something about that kind of thinking gets in the way.

My thoughts come from the 'nothingness'. Every time we talk about 'nothingness' coming to 'somethingness', it's always in the

spiritual realm. I know I talk a certain way but I know there are other people that talk in their ways. They are heavier, more spiritual, and I like to hear them. I like their explanations. The dumb one or the profound one, talking about the 'nothingness', there is something there, I just love that.

### Schooling

I am self-taught. I didn't have any formal art education beyond middle school. I sometimes read the art books in the library. They have given me new ideas. For instance I learned about a technique called "Blotching" where you use your imagination to add to what already exists on the surface.

I don't have a particular favorite artists but I do like Salvador Dali. I am fascinated by the bending clocks and other subliminal gestures of his works.

### Displaying My Art

I can't say I am particular where a piece created by me would hang. They can be



Leap of Faith

*"This piece is called 'Leap of Faith' because the viewer does not know what the frog sees. He is going to jump whether it is good or bad. He just has to get himself together and he is going to do it. After I made it I thought about what was he doing, and the name came to me - Leap of Faith!"*



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placed anywhere, anybody sees my expression belonging. I want stuff to be in whatever places it can.

I want it to go wherever you love it. If you love that butterfly I want you to buy it and put it up, and that it not be about me – just enjoy my work. Get from my art what it is doing. If I saw it in your house I would just be elated that I saw it there.

**Selling My Art**

I couldn't give an estimate of how many pieces I create in a year. I create as the spirit moves me. Sometimes I work on and finish several pieces in a short time. At other times there are lapses in my drive to draw or paint.

"I don't normally talk a lot" I have been looking at art for years. I really don't give myself credit for being able to do art. I feel like I would rather be behind the scenes than to talk about my art.

I want to make some money. Fred explained, "But I pray for this: I have a problem that I have to get this stronghold out of my mind, and try to think that money is not bad". I have this problem with money. You know how people used to say that money is the root of all evil? I know I could get paid for my art but I wish it wasn't a pay thing. Money can be a comfort for things, it can do that. But it's just that I have this small conflict in my mind about it. When and if I get money I can use it to give back. I am right now just poking along but I do see a light. I can see people like my art, and I hope people come along with the right thought.

I think the confidence I feel about being able to do art will bring me out of that thought about money. I think about giving what I can do. I think I can learn a lesson in this. I haven't been at that level where I sell a lot. I like the idea that if I can make some kind of income I can give it back because I would love to do that.

**Helping Others**

It depends on how you look at helping people. I am the type of person that if I'm riding my bike and there is a lady with a flat tire I want to help. You don't have to know my name. I can help you with that tire. You don't know how great I feel as a Good Samaritan, as I walk away.

**Looking Towards Tomorrow**

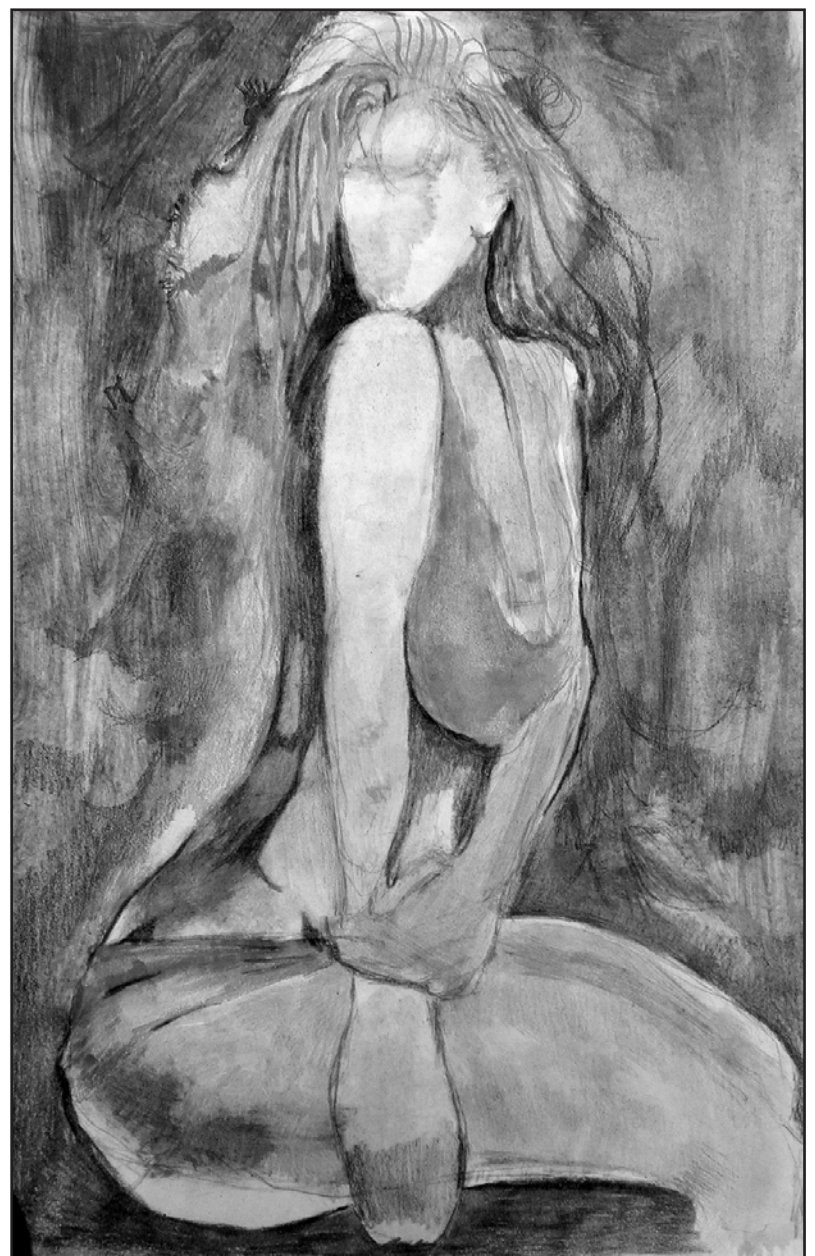
I look back at my school day pictures and see that I have gotten better. I realize that I am still practicing my art. I want to keep practicing and building up my confidence, getting the dimensions right, like in people's faces.

All I know is I am going to keep going forward.



**Flying Dreams**

"I hope people will run on their own perceptions of this. She does not have a mouth. It is a mental thing because she is thinking beautiful thoughts, not speaking, just thinking. The eyes in the wings may be deep understanding."



**Red Hared Lady**

"She does not have a face and she is being left intentionally abstract. The colors catch the random beauty I saw. It started out from something in a magazine—I just wanted to draw the form. Then I wanted to put my colors in it. I wanted to make the watercolor do what I wanted it to do. I quickly left the magazine picture and forgot I was ever drawing from it."



## There is a Way: Resources and Programs for Homeless Youth

By Clarette Sutton

It was cold Thursday night (on Nov. 11, yes Veteran's Day) when I headed for the Weaver House at Greensboro Urban Ministry for Thursday's Women Support Group. If I got there in time, I knew could have supper with the homeless clients. I arrived and as I entered the door I saw someone that looked familiar. It was a former student. I just watched him while chatting with some clients.

Afterward, we were in the lobby and I said, "Hi, Omar." He said, "Hi," but couldn't remember where he knew me from. I told him I was a former teacher of his. We talked and I asked him why he was at Weaver House. He told me that he and his mother had had a disagreement and she told him to leave. He left, unaware of where to go, but somehow ended up at the Weaver House, our homeless shelter in Greensboro.

Omar was 18 years old and a Guilford County high school graduate. Although he may be 18, many youth like him are faced with homelessness because of family disagreements or aging out of foster care. There were 310 documented homeless high school youth in Greensboro in 2010 ([www.joesphshouse.net](http://www.joesphshouse.net)). Many live on the streets, stay at friends' houses, or try to find other shelter.

One program that helps with that age group is Joseph's House on 2703 East Bessemer Avenue, started by Reverend Nancy McLean. Reverend McLean said that she encountered a lot of trials with her son and realized the need for a youth shelter. It was through him that Joseph's House was established. It is a structured program and house for young males up to 25 years old.

When most young people are told to hit the door, there are resources available, that is, if space is available. Like many shelters, space is limited and there are waiting lists. So, to the young, if you must hit the door, remember that there may be a Joseph's House near you.

If you are aging out of foster care, there are programs available also, please take advantage of them. Most foster kids are released at 18 years of age. Youth from foster care face several issues. "Already

burdened by their childhood experiences of abuse, neglect or abandonment, these young people leave the foster care system without the knowledge, skills, experience, attitudes, habits, and relationships that will enable them to be productive and connected members of society." They are not equipped to find gainful employment. Many have untreated physical and mental health needs, and no health insurance. Most have no housing options. Some have no immigration status. And none have had the benefit of parental role models to transmit the expertise needed to negotiate the trials of living on one's own.

Without family or any other dependable adults to rely on for assistance, these young people are, not surprisingly, at high risk of homelessness, joblessness, illness, incarceration, welfare dependency, early childbearing, and sexual and physical victimization. According to studies of young people discharged to themselves in different states: 12-30 percent struggled with homelessness; 40-63 percent did not complete high school; 25-55 percent were unemployed; those employed had average earnings below the poverty level, and only 38 percent of those employed were still working after one year; 30-62 percent had trouble accessing health care due to inadequate finances or lack of insurance; 32-40 percent were forced to rely on some form of public assistance and 50 percent experienced extreme financial hardship; 31-42 percent were arrested; 18-26 percent were incarcerated; and 40-60 percent of the young women were pregnant within 12-18 months of leaving foster care." (White House Task Force)

As a result, youth aging out of the foster care system are becoming homeless at disconcerting rates. Anywhere from 12% to 36% of young people transitioning out of the system experience homelessness (Cook, 1991; Courtney & Pilivian, 1998; Reilly, 2003). As many as 3 in 10 of the nation's homeless adults have a history in foster care (Roman & Wolfe, 1995). Young people aging out of public systems are confronted with critical housing needs that, left unaddressed, have

the potential to cause irreparable harm.

In an effort to assist youth in their transitions to adulthood, the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999 established the John Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (Chafee Program), allowing states more funding and flexibility to help young people transition to adulthood. States received increased funding and were permitted to extend Medicaid eligibility to former foster children up to age 21.

Additionally, the Chafee program allows states to use up to 30% of their federal funds to provide room and board services to youth 18-21 years of age. This includes young people who move into independent-living programs, age out, or lose touch with the child welfare agency and then return for assistance before reaching 21 (National Foster Care Awareness Project, 2000). ([www.cwla.org](http://www.cwla.org))

In North Carolina, **Seven Homes** is a licensed child placing agency providing traditional family foster care, therapeutic foster care, and adoption services for children in North Carolina. Seven Homes has offices located in High Point, Greenville, and soon in the western region of North Carolina. Seven Homes provides care for and works with children and families throughout the State of North Carolina. One of their programs called Independent Living can help youth aging out of Foster Care

**Independent Living:** Seven Homes also works with unfortunate children that do not have a permanent family and cannot find an adoptive family. These children will turn 18 and age out of the Social Services system. Annually it is estimated that 25,000 children nationally will age out of the system without a permanent home or family to help support them. To help children through this period in their lives Seven Homes provides independent living skills training and continued support after they leave care. ([7homes4kids.org](http://7homes4kids.org)).

So if you need assistance with shelter and life skills go to the computer lab at your local library and check out these resources. These programs are there to help you. You need not become homeless.

## IRC's Jane Enoch

By Anita Gilmore, Reporter



Photo: Suzanne Brigham

Jane Enoch, better known as "Ms Jane" has worked the front desk of the Interactive Resource Center as a volunteer receptionist and sign-in clerk I 2010. She is from Nashville, North Carolina and is the 13<sup>th</sup> child of 15 children. Jane has three children of her own and lives in Greensboro. In April, 2011 she was hired by the IRC to become a part of the paid staff. In this job, Ms. Jane is responsible for meeting every person who enters the IRC doors from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm Monday through Friday since each guest who arrives is first required to sign-in at her desk. Ms Jane enters the guest's name and some limited personal data into the IRC's "Client Activity File." It is then her job to advise each guest of the different services available. She then assists with matching the client's needs with the available IRC service. Finally, Ms Jane sends the client to either a self-service spot (laundry, shower, phone room or computers ) or to an IRC staff specialist who can render further assistance (nurse, barber, social worker, job skills classroom or GED class) etc.

The IRC provides a wide variety of services for its guests/clients whether they are homeless or not. The IRC handles about 250 people per day. Ms Jane says her personal mission in this job is to get to know all clients personally especially since her face and voice are the first impressions clients receive upon entry.

Many guests who walk through the front door of the IRC are going through a lot of negative experiences in their lives and Ms Jane says her goal is to help them in their efforts to turn each day into a better day. She says, "I just continue to do the best I can with joy and gladness and pray that I get them where they need to be and the services they need from us. I receive a great amount of gratitude and satisfaction from within myself as well as from the clients. At the IRC. Jane says she is proud to work for such a fine organization as the IRC. She told the *Greensboro Voice* that she works with a super team of dedicated, passionate professionals whose every effort is focused on the needs of their guests. The IRC could not ask for a more welcoming receptionist than Ms. Jane.



Anita Gilmore



The Interactive Resource Center assists people who are homeless, recently homeless or facing homelessness reconnect with their own lives and with the community at large.



[www.facebook.com/gsoadaycenter](http://www.facebook.com/gsoadaycenter)



[@gsoadaycenter](https://twitter.com/gsoadaycenter)

[gsodaycenter.org](http://gsodaycenter.org) (336)332-0824





The Lonesome Prairie Dogs: Steve Terrill, Molly Stouten and Alan Teichman

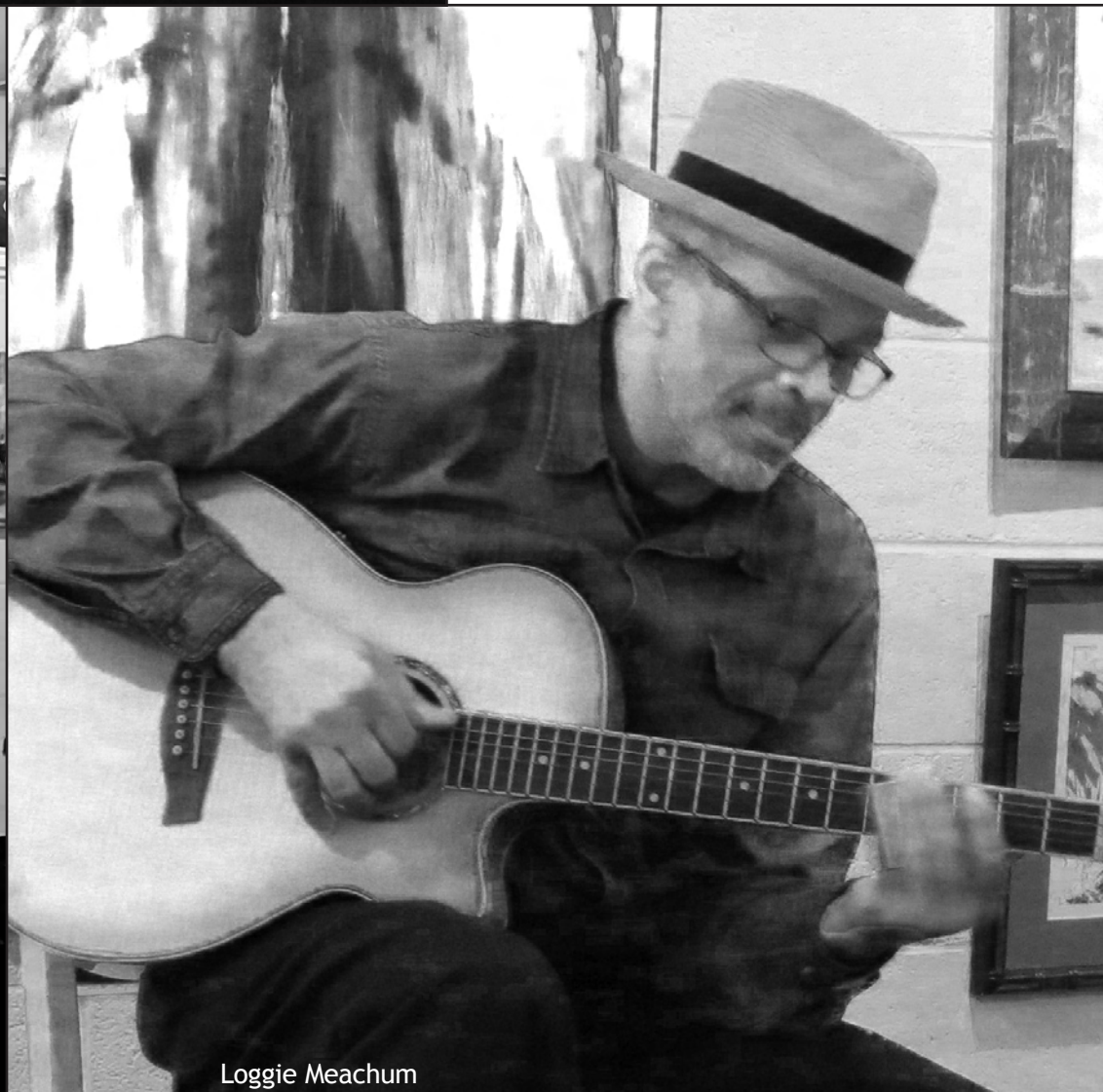
## Local Musicians Support Fund Raiser for The Greensboro Voice

Sunday May 5<sup>th</sup>, a gloomy rainy day, was enlightened by the musical fundraiser, Voices for the Voice, to raise money for the paper. A small but enthusiastic audience supported the local musicians who gave of their time and talent for the free event which was held in an artistic space at the Creative Center on 16<sup>th</sup> Street. Local raconteur, Loggie Meachum led off with classic ballads, storytelling, and poetry recitation. The Lonesome Prairie Dogs and Alley Rabbits followed with their old timey string bands, accompanied by Loggie's impromptu playing of the spoons. Both string bands played familiar music that invited the audience to both reminisce participate. The fundraiser ended with Anita Gilmore's inspirational gospel singing.

Door prizes included a framed photograph of horses on the Outer Banks taken by staff member, Stephanie Thomas, a gift card to Tate Street coffee and a basket of hair products donated by Leon's on Tate Street, a long-time supporter of the voice. We thank those who have supported The Greensboro Voice in the past and with this fund raiser. Look for another fundraiser in the future.



The Alley Rabbits: Tim Barkley, Nancy McCurry and Keith Buckner



Loggie Meachum



# Community Resources

SHELTER

**Trailways Housing**  
407 E. Washington Street  
336-332-0824

**Christian Counseling and Wellness Center**  
*(Temporary housing & counseling services)*  
1118 Grecale Street  
336-273-8305

**Greensboro Urban Ministry Weaver House**  
*(Housing, food and clothing assistance)*  
305 W. Lee Street  
336-553-2665

**Greensboro Urban Ministry Pathways Housing**  
*(for families with children)*  
3517 N. Church Street  
336-271-5988

**Mary’s House**  
*(for single mothers recovering from substance abuse issues)*  
520 Guilford Avenue  
336-275-0820

**Room at the Inn of the Triad**  
*(Temporary housing for homeless, pregnant women)*  
734 Park Avenue  
336-275-0206

**Salvation Army Center of Hope**  
1311 S. Eugene Street  
336-273-5572

**Act Together Crisis Care**  
*(Youth ages 11-17)*  
1601 Huffine Mill Road  
336-375-1332

**Joseph’s House**  
*(Youth ages 18-21)*  
2703 E. Bessemer Avenue  
336-389-9880  
Hotline: 336-558-1695

FOOD

Breakfast

**7:00 – 8:15 a.m. at Beloved Community Center Hospitality House**  
437 Arlington Street  
336-230-0001  
Serves on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday & Friday

**7:30 – 9:00 a.m. at St. Paul Baptist Church**  
1309 Larkin Street  
336-275-4680  
Serves on Monday, Wednesday & Friday

**8:00 a.m. at Grace United Methodist**  
438 W. Friendly Avenue  
336-272-2171  
Serves on Tuesday

**Breakfast (continued)**  
**7:00 a.m. at Potter’s House**  
305 W. Lee Street  
336-271-5959  
Serves on Wednesday

**8:30 a.m. at Nu-Life Church**  
209 W. Florida Street  
336-275-3243  
Serves on Saturday

**Serves Lunch Every Day**  
**10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. at Potter’s House Community Kitchen**  
305 W. Lee Street  
336-271-5959

Dinner

**2:00 Sunday Dinners**  
Center City Park  
Sponsored by Church of the Covenant, The Remnant Seekers, and Ebenezer Baptist Church

**5:00 - 6:30p SOUP Unity Christian Center**  
803 Waugh Street @ E Wendover  
336-790-8285  
Serves on Wednesday

**5:00 p.m. Worship Service & Meal New Creation Community Presbyterian Church**  
617 N. Elm Street  
336-478-4775  
Serves on Sunday

**5:30 – 6:30 p.m. at Greensboro Central Library**  
407 E. Washington Street  
Serves on Monday

**6:00 – 7:30 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church’s Multin Life Center (arrive by 6:30 p.m.)**  
617 N. Elm Street  
336-373-0445  
Serves on Tuesday & Thursday

**6:00 p.m. at Grace Community Church**  
643 W. Lee Street  
336-379-1936  
Serves on Wednesday

**5:30 p.m. at New Birth Sounds of Thunder**  
2300 S. Elm-Eugene Street  
336-324-7902  
Serves on Friday

**4:30 p.m. at YWCA**  
1 YWCA Place  
Meal served by REAL OutreachServes on Saturday

RESOURCE CENTERS

**Family Service of the Piedmont**  
315 E. Washington Street  
336-387-6161

**The Servant Center Grocery Assistance Program**  
1312 Lexington Avenue  
336-275-8585

**Beloved Community Center**  
437 Arlington Street  
336-370-4330

**Joseph’s House Resource Center**  
2703 E. Bessemer Avenue  
336-389-9880  
Open Monday, Wednesday & Friday  
from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Interactive Resource Center**  
407 E. Washington Street  
336-332-0824  
Open Monday through Friday  
from 8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

**Women’s Resource Center**  
628 Summit Avenue  
336-275-6090

**Sherri Denese Jackson Foundation for Domestic Violence Prevention**  
2025 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Suite C)  
336-510-9292

**Malachi House II**  
3603 Burlington Road  
336-375-0900

OTHER RESOURCES

**HealthServe**  
1002 S. Eugene Street  
336-271-5999

**HealthServe**  
1439 E. Cone Boulevard  
336-375-6104

**Joblink Career Center**  
303 N. Raleigh Street  
336-373-5922

**Word of Life Food Pantry**  
Call 336-517-7755  
Monday-Thursday from 2:00 – 6:00 p.m.

**Focused Sistas Outreach**  
P.O. Box 3941  
336-501-6570 or 336-254-4233  
Open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.



## Community Resources

### Goodwill Industries

1235 S. Eugene Street  
336-275-9801

### Shiloh Baptist Church

1210 South Eugene Street  
336-272-1166  
Food Pantry open Monday through Friday  
from 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
*Utility assistance may be available*

### RESOURCE CENTERS (continued)

#### St. Phillip AME Zion Church

1330 Ashe Street  
336-272-1301  
Clothing and Food Bank open every Wednesday  
from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

#### Prince of Peace Lutheran

1100 Curtis Street  
336-378-9738  
Farmers Market every other Thursday

#### St. Paul Missionary Baptist

1309 Larkin Street  
336-275-4680  
Food bank open on Tuesdays and Thursdays  
from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
Utility assistance Tuesdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.

#### Rabbit Quarter Ministries

2904 Esco Place  
High Point, NC 27260  
336-307-0119

### ACCESS 24 CALL CENTERS

#### The Guilford Center Information Services

1-800-853-5163

#### Domestic Violence Line

336-273-7273

#### NAMI Hotline (Mental Health Services)

336-370-4264

#### United Way 211

1-888-892-1162

## Step Up Ministry

By Zakeya Mitchell, Staff Reporter

**C**harged with the mission of homelessness prevention, StepUp Ministry partners with local unemployed adults that successfully complete their Job Readiness Program, and assists them in acquiring a stable lifestyle.

Sheron Sumner, the Founder and former Executive Director of StepUp Ministry Greensboro, is a member of First Presbyterian Church where she has served in many leadership roles and Outreach ministries. Sheron recognized the need for a hot, nutritious evening meal for the homeless and needy and led efforts to begin Hot Dish and Hope in July 2008. The program is not just for the homeless but anyone in the community who is needy and wants to share in the fellowship. Hot Dish and Hope serves dinner every Tuesday and Thursday evenings in the Mulin Life Center at the First Presbyterian Church all 52 weeks of the year.

Soon after Hot Dish and Hope started, the guests indicated their need for clothing, and the clothing closet was started. Sheron and others led efforts at First Presbyterian to start a WE! emergency shelter for December through March. For four years she oversaw and coordinated the WE! shelter programs at seven city churches through Greensboro Urban Ministry.

However, after a few years of managing these community outreach programs, Sheron felt there was a void in these efforts. She concluded that though it was a good idea to offer people food, clothing and shelter, all basic needs, there was a deeper problem that was not being met. The people that used the services regularly lacked the financial stability to provide for themselves, so they needed more than food, clothing and shelter; *they needed jobs.*

And that is where the idea for StepUp came from, seeing a need and acting on faith that the need can be met. But, like most great ideas, starting it was more complicated than brainstorming.

During weekly visits to Raleigh, NC to

babysit her grandchildren, she read in her son's church newsletter about a ministry in his church similar to the idea she was envisioning to assist people to find employment. It was called StepUp Ministry, founded in 1988. StepUp Raleigh has won state awards and recognition and has an 80% success rate of participant employment for 12 months, a big step toward stability and independence. It was here that Sheron discovered her blueprint. For two years Sheron worked with the Raleigh staff visioning how to replicate the program in Greensboro, building community support to start the program, and finding start-up funding.

StepUp Greensboro began business in September 2011. Over the past 22 months Sheron hired and developed a strong, competent staff of four who have passion and compassion to give people a "hand up" rather than a "hand out." Manuel Hyman, Employment Counselor; Fanta Dorley, Life Skills Director; and Anthony Bass, Employer Recruiter have supported 429 graduates of the free Job Readiness Workshop and assisted more than 60% of them to find employment and maintain it by implementing the same strategy and process that the Raleigh location created. The success has been outstanding!

StepUp Ministry also offers a 12-month Life Skills Program that helps the participants and their children to continue to move forward, thus assisting with homelessness prevention in the Greensboro area. In addition, a Computer Class, a Job Friends support group, GED/Literacy

Program and a Money Boot Camp are offered. Each component has its particular itinerary to help people build the bridges they need to be successful, make a change, or start over. For instance, Life Skills is a program that is only offered to individuals that successfully complete the Job Readiness program and maintain a job for 3 months. Participants set goals, learn strategies, use tools, and practice skills to manage and improve all aspects of their

life---personal development, credit, money, relationships, vocational training and planning for their future.

The point is to change the mentality of the clients so they are able to see beyond their situation, receive the hand reached out toward them, and find the courage to step into something new so they are capable of achieving the lifestyle they talk about on the first day of Job training. With this comprehensive approach of StepUp, dreams are real and achievable.

But as Sheron says on the first day, "You have to be ready and willing to change;" so the program is not for everyone. And believe it or not, there are some clients that walk out, or attend the entire week and still do not graduate because they did not prove they were ready and willing to make the sacrifice of change for a better life. Interestingly enough, as harsh as that sounds, it is important one realize what StepUp strives to do for participants. StepUp develops partnerships with local companies and advocates for participants who complete Job Readiness. The partnership with employers results in matching a participant's skills with available open positions and speaking on their behalf to secure a job. These relationships and strong advocacy are powerful! *The power of connectedness* is Sheron's saying, a network that acts on the behalf of their clients. It takes time and patience. It makes the difference!

So many of these participants find their own paths, reconstruct their broken spirits, develop a positive attitude, and redefine what it means to truly start over. StepUp Ministry is the evidence that no matter what mistakes one made there is hope and a second chance for you yet, if you are willing to work for it---a lesson everyone can learn from.

StepUp Ministry  
707 N. Greene Street  
336-676-5871



## Do you have suggestions for The Greensboro Voice or want to join our newspaper team?

The Greensboro Voice's team welcomes feedback from the community about how we can improve our newspaper. We also always welcome new team members to our group. For more information, visit our website at [www.greensborovoices.org](http://www.greensborovoices.org) or e-mail us at [greensborovoices@gmail.com](mailto:greensborovoices@gmail.com).

## Do you know a resource we should add to this page?

If so, please e-mail our team at [greensborovoices@gmail.com](mailto:greensborovoices@gmail.com) and we will include your information on our Community Resources page!