

The Tiny Houses Greensboro Project

by Kathe Latham

Tiny Houses Greensboro is a group of diverse local organizations and individuals who aim to reduce homelessness by engaging in public and private partnerships to create a tiny home community, with the active participation of people experiencing homelessness.



We're engaged in a grassroots effort to build Greensboro's first Tiny House prototype, initiated by Resources in Artful Living (REAL) who received a grant to provide a 2-day workshop in "How to build a tiny house." The first workshop occurred on October 25th and 26th at which time we framed in a 128 square foot house. In November they added the exterior siding to the house and began the interior work.

Our current partner members include: The Interactive Resource Center, Resources for Artful Living, the Center for Community-Engaged Design at UNCG, members of the Greensboro Voice, and the IRC-TG Edible Community Garden project. Others include a diverse cross section of community members and people experiencing homelessness in Greensboro.

Benefits to the community include: providing job training skills and greater dignity and self sufficiency for people experiencing homelessness, strengthening collective efforts to provide low cost housing, and creating stronger networks of concerned citizens who want to participate in proactive approaches to change. Reducing homelessness benefits the whole community.

IRC guests Walter Jamaison, Earl Zayzak, Ruth Henderson, Johnny Johnson, Renee (Inspire) Perry, and others have been involved in the project over the last few months. As Earl puts it "it's a sense of pride accomplishment and safety to have a home of your own and be a part of this project." Ruth Henderson said "It's all about love really. That's what makes things happen."

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A Different Voice for Veterans in Greensboro

by Lavinia C. Jackson

Having served five and a half years in the United States Coast Guard, my perspective on military service is deeply rooted in a sincere appreciation for the American way of life.

Often, the word "veteran" conjures up a variety of images, as well as the word "homeless". By putting them together, one can easily see the man standing at a street corner with a sign, claiming to be a veteran.

What isn't seen is the female veteran living in a tent, fighting off a rape, or the addict who's moved through every service in the city and can't get help because he or she is back on crack. These and many more veterans teeter on the edge of the forgotten.

Ask a veteran how he or she defines the term "served" and most will agree that there's more to it than signing the contract. First the veteran has to go through boot camp, and then they come to understand things like the crud, random sickness, chain of command, zero dark thirty, and liberty. And there's more. They also understand the price of freedom, literally and figuratively, as they drill, jump from planes, road march, and see death in the most horrific ways possible.

Service to our country takes on a different meaning once a veteran has received a DD214. This singular document validates and determines who he or she was for the period of time they served, and certifies veteran status for possible future benefits. Over the course of years, a veteran may have seen combat more than once, been sexually traumatized, lost comrades or in contrast, stood next to the President. The DD214 reduces these experiences to several lines and a signature, with the individual's life written between awards and deployments.

A veteran spends his or her time being trained to do certain tasks, within a very isolated environment. The transition to civilian life can take up to 7 years. Some never adjust or recover. Though some veterans leave active duty and do well, others struggle with post-traumatic stress disorder, traumatic brain injury, addiction, and loss of limbs, loss of moral direction or chronic diseases. And it is a lonely feeling for some veterans to navigate the civilian world without the old strict chain of command.



Veterans receive clothing during Triad Stand Down

Although Greensboro is home to many veterans, there's not a five-day-a-week hub for veterans' services. Veterans and some public and non-governmental agency service providers aren't always aware of the process, and that can make it difficult for many veterans to access assistance. There is assistance for veterans however, if they know how to find it.

For instance, every Disabled American Veterans County Service Officer is centrally located and will refer to other services. Disabled American Veterans does a great job of working to meet veterans' needs by helping with claims for benefits, Social Security, and housing. They also provide limited transportation to each of the VA centers, Salisbury, Winston-Salem, and Durham; however, the DAV is only open 2 days a week.

The Interactive Resource Center hosts a VA Outreach Social Worker every Monday. The social worker can determine eligibility and enroll veterans in the VA system, and she also travels throughout the Triad on the other days of the week.

Legal Aide has an Attorney dedicated to working with veterans who have legal issues.

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IRC's Cornelia Montaque



Although I have never experienced homelessness, I can certainly express empathy for those who have and are experiencing it. From my late teens until now, my educational background is centered on human services, social work and public health education. I have always been involved in organizations that work to improve the well being of others. I believe it is everyone's duty to better the lives of those around us.

My title at the IRC is Administrative Support, but as any IRC staff member I can tell you, I do whatever needs to be done to assist our guests. One of the main things I do is assist the guests with getting their mail. As you may know, individuals who are homeless have no address, so they use the IRC's address for the purpose of receiving mail. It is my responsibility to sort and pass out the mail every day, which can take up to 3 ½ hours to accomplish.

I also answer the phone, fax, print, and copy materials for the guests and the staff. I am a Notary Public, so this helps out by keeping the IRC from having to send guests or staff elsewhere to have paperwork notarized.

I feel it is up to me and the other staff members to always represent the IRC with a positive and professional attitude towards guests, volunteers, donors, and the community.

I love what I do, and though my work is sometimes a challenge, I feel fortunate because at the end of the day, how many people can really say they love what they do?

My name is Cornelia and I have been employed at the Interactive Resource Center for almost two years. My work here at the IRC is geared toward providing services to the clients, or "guests" who walk through our doors every day.

I was at the IRC as a trainee in another program for 6 months before I was hired. During my training period I was always thinking, "It would be great if they'd hire me. I would love to work here."

THE GREENSBORO VOICE

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 Wednesdays from 12:30-2:00 p.m. The Interactive Resource Center is located at 407 E. Washington Street. Everyone is welcome at our meetings!

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A Different Voice for Veterans in Greensboro

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The Salvation Army has funding for honorably discharged qualified veterans who need help with rent or utilities.

The Triad Veterans and Military Families Coalition may be able to provide very limited emergency funding. This is a group of veterans and veterans' organizations that are working together.

A qualified veteran can get housing at Open Door Ministries in High Point or Servant Center in Greensboro, as long as there's space.

Veterans are able to stay at the Weaver house, but they don't get preferential treatment.

Open Door Ministries works with Vet-Net to house single veterans permanently. With all of these options, a veteran has to have transportation and a willingness to go through the process. The IRC will help with bus passes only to a shelter or upon completion of the Job Skills Class. Peer support is necessary to make this go smoothly. It only hurts the veteran when he or she has to wait even more.

The NC Vets Corps works with veterans and military families in transition. That

could mean in between duty stations or exiting the service.

My focus has been with homeless veterans because I now serve at the Interactive Resource Center. On a daily basis, I get to help veterans find jobs, housing, toiletries, food, and other things they may need.

By partnering with churches and other organizations, we are able to keep veterans' issues on the table. Helping a veteran get clothing for an interview, making phone calls on behalf of veterans, delivering food and necessities, supporting veteran owned businesses and encouraging them to give back, and visiting veterans in their new homes has all been a part of serving them. Sometimes helping a veteran get on his feet takes a few days. Most often it takes months.

VetsCorps provided a unique support for the veterans in the area, in transition. NC VetsCorps allow me to work with other veterans and thank them for their service. They also thank me. We, as veterans know the price we have paid to protect this country and we deserve to be honored.



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Walter Jamaison said "If I had this house, not only would it give me a sense of pride, it would give me the sense that I could be an example to the rest of the community. Homeless people are not useless people. We can take responsibility, and a house like this would give us a sense of responsibility and pride."

We need your support

We need funding to complete the building process. We've reached about 20% of our financial goals, and now we need money to complete the framing and interior work.

Join our efforts by participating in our weekly meetings held every Friday at 12:30 at the IRC, 407 East Washington Street (close to the Depot) All are invited.

The house should be finished in January and then we can all see what other possibilities exist to build a tiny home community right here in Greensboro with people experiencing homelessness at the table, planning, building and co-creating.

The Tiny Houses Greensboro team welcomes your ideas and support.

To make a donation go to: www.indiegogo.com/projects/tiny-houses-greensboro

For more information go to: www.facebook.com/tinyhousesgso

tinyhouses@hushmail.com

tinyhousesgso.wordpress.com



A Homeless Man's Story (Part 2)

by Chris Ward



As we left off in the first part of my story, I had just arrived at the Weaver House shelter. But now, as I write this, I am sitting in my very own kitchen, cooking a meal, after coming home from work. It is quite the change, I promise you.

The date was December 11th, of 2013 when I arrived at Weaver House, having only heard of it at the hospital a couple of days before. I was told to go in and meet a lady by the name of Miss Maggie. As I left the hospital, I was given a single bus ride pass and instructions on how to use it. Now, being the country bumpkin that I am, I hadn't ridden a city bus since I was a young child living in Maryland. I had no idea how they worked, but luckily, or maybe divinely, there was a fella on the bus whose wife had also been in the hospital with me. He recognized me. He was also a homeless gentleman, and his name was Carl. He helped me get to where I needed to go.

I walked into Weaver House and approached the desk. Now as any of you who have stayed at the Weaver house know, Miss Sherry can be a tad intimidating. Or maybe it felt that way to me because I was going into a new environment.

I told her who I was and where I was from, and I asked to see Miss Maggie. I was greeted by a short, sweet woman who explained the process to me. Soon, I finished the paperwork and waited for further instructions. That's when Nurse Brenda talked to me. She found out what

I needed. She spoke to Miss Maggie and Mr. Eddie, and explained the details to them. Before long, it was confirmed that I would be a resident. They gave me a note to take to the Salvation Army Family Store to procure a few pieces of clothing, since I didn't have much, and a coat, since I didn't have one.

After finding a slightly too-small hoodie and a pair of sweat pants, I went back to Weaver House to wait for a bed. I was informed that there wasn't one available, and I would be going to Faith Step to sleep on one of the cots. That was more than gracious, and I was happy to go. However, when I got there, they said I was too big to sleep on one of the cots and sent me back to Weaver House. At Weaver House, I was told I could sleep in a chair in the lobby for the night. I was still fine with that, but as fate would have it, one guest did not show up that night, so a bed became available for me.

The very next day, Carl met me at Weaver House and walked with me to show me how to get to the Interactive Resource Center. I was again nervous, as I entered into the main lobby for the first time. I did my intake process, saw Nurse Brenda yet again, received a prescription for an abscessed tooth, and got a voucher to get my ID. I felt like I was making progress there, so I went every day.

The first Monday I was at the IRC, I immediately took the job skills class offered to me. It wasn't that it was a hard class, but

it was difficult to focus with the medications I was on. They kept me pretty drowsy for the most part, and staying awake could be a real chore. Despite my troubles focusing, the gentlemen who taught the class worked with me, and after three days, I had a certificate.

I was also able to wash my clothes at the IRC several times a week, which as many of you readers will know, is a life saver when you don't have the money to do your laundry. Not to mention the fact that showers are offered daily. I was also looking for work daily, taking full advantage of the computer lab, and even using it to brush up on my typing skills since I was a bit rusty.

I continued to take advantage of everything offered to me at the IRC, whether it was something helpful like a money management class, landlord/tenant laws class, or mental health class, or as fun as a Storyscapes, or Creative Writing. I viewed everything as an opportunity to put myself in a better position. In fact, it was during my second visit to the creative writing class that I was asked by Miss Frances if I would stay and join in on a Greensboro Voice Meeting. I agreed, not quite knowing what to expect.

Immediately I was made to feel welcome. After discussing what I had written in Creative Writing, I was asked if I would like to write for The Voice. I figured this would be a great opportunity to grow my communication skills and writing abilities, and hey, even to be published. Again I seized the opportunity, figuring at the very least it would look good on a resume.

In the mean time, I was now transitioning from Weaver House to the Salvation Army Center of Hope. It was here that things really began to change. I had weekly one-on-one meetings with a case manager. They offered classes, most of which I had already taken, but I gladly took them again. I was determined to seize every opportunity, and I continued to strive. I think people were really beginning to take notice of how hard I was continuing to work. I was at Creative Writing every week and followed that up with the Greensboro Voice meeting. I attended as many mental health classes as I could. I continued to search for a job, and I prayed. All I wanted was a chance, and little did I know that it was coming.

As I stood on the number 8 bus, headed to a dentist appointment, a fella I had met at Weaver House boarded the bus. We began to talk and catch up a bit. I asked him how work was going, and he asked me the same in turn. I explained that I had yet to find employment but was still looking. He asked me what kind of work I was looking

for, and I told him. Then, he told me about a place I had never heard of. He suggested I stop by there after my visit to the dentist, as it just happened to be a couple stops down from the dentist.

So after my dentist appointment, I hopped on the bus and figured I would just ride past the place and give them a call first to see if they were hiring. Oddly enough, the bus driver stopped at the stop right in front of the place; I didn't need to be told twice. I went ahead and hopped off the bus and made my way to the building. They had not opened yet, so I waited around for about a half hour before heading inside. A single employee was there, and she gave me an application. As I filled it out, the owner and his wife came in, and I was given a interview on the spot. I was told they didn't have a position open at the moment. However, they gave me the number and asked me to give them a call every so often to check and see if a position was available. This was May. I was given the opportunity I needed a few weeks later in June.

Things were really starting to turn around for me at this point. I was also at this time approved for a housing voucher and was busy looking for housing. It was a difficult search, but I persevered. I continued to work at my job and just kept striving and never gave up.

I am happy to tell you all now that although a lot of things tried to get in my way, I worked through them. With all my hard work, I am now, as I said at the beginning of this article, sitting in my own home, having just finished cooking dinner after coming home from work.

And finally, after just ten months, I have managed to get myself from the streets to a home of my own. During this journey, there were so many people who encouraged me, pushed me, supported me, helped me, and cared for me, and I can say that I would not have been successful without all of you. Everyone who has helped me has been more important to me than you can imagine, and for that I thank you. And I also thank you, the reader, for taking an interest in my story, which touches my heart.

I hope this story has been able to inspire or give hope to those of you who are just now coming into the situation we call "disadvantaged," or even to those of you who have been dealing with this for awhile. None of us ever makes it alone, even if we think we did. Rather, it's a Higher Power, or someone from Street Watch making sure you have something you need, or even Potter's House providing lunch. We all get help from one person or another. Thank you all again.

Exploring the Journey of Partnering to End Homelessness in Guilford County

Surely advocates for the homeless population imagine and work hard to present resolutions to eradicate homelessness in our community. As I often wonder how this would happen and what the model for ending homelessness would look like, there are countless advocates in our community who express disappointment with key organizations that are specifically designed to bring these solutions to reality.

My own desire to increase my learning and understanding and develop my own insights about how effective or ineffective this organization has been in its mission to end homelessness fueled my desire to attend the Partners Ending Homelessness press conference and workshop luncheon on Tuesday September 9, 2014 at the Greensboro Public Library. Arriving for my moment of truth, I found a seat amongst the various representatives of community organizations that support and provide resources for the local homeless population.

Elizabeth Phillips, Executive Director of the Phillips Foundation, welcomed everyone, introduced herself, and gave the audience some insights about the Phillips Foundation and its community initiatives. Next up was President and CEO of United Way of Greater Greensboro, Michelle Gethers-Clark. She presented the concerns of the United Way and delivered both a faith-inspired talk and an energetic rousing call for committed support from all community members and organizations to join the movement to end chronic homelessness in Guilford County. Finally, Darryl Kosciak, Executive Director of Partners Ending Homelessness, was introduced by Gethers-Clark. Overall, Mr. Kosciak discussed the preliminary results

of the “Housing First” initiative to end chronic homelessness in Guilford County within five years.

Since its launching in February, the program has reduced chronic homelessness in Guilford County by providing access to stable housing to 28 formerly homeless households. According to the agency, there were 107 cases of chronic homelessness in Guilford County. PEH projects the “Housing First” initiative will decrease that number by 15-20% by the next point-in-time count in January 2015.” “With the \$1 million grant provided in 2013 from the Phillips Foundation to launch this initiative, PEH used these resources to hire an international consultant, expand its staff and program, and systematically identify vulnerable individuals with the most urgent needs. The Salvation Army of Greensboro will manage the housing portion of the program while Psychotherapeutic Services, Inc. has developed an Assertive Community Treatment Team (ACTT) for long-term housing support and case management. Thus, the program emphasizes housing individuals first, then providing all clients with wraparound services to address their specific needs. The early statistics provided by Kosciak highlighted how the model has proven to be effective in keeping individuals off the streets long-term, while also saving taxpayer dollars on emergency services frequently provided to chronically homeless individuals when they are not housed. For example, of the first group of five clients that entered housing, \$30,650 was spent on 475 shelter

nights the year before these individuals were housed. In comparison, the initiative has spent a total of \$8,927 on housing these same individuals during their first six months of the program.

Thus Kosciak said,

We’re not only helping people, but we’re significantly reducing emergency room visits, police calls, court costs and shelter stays. In the year before housing, the initial group spent a total of 28 nights in jail, at an approximate cost of over \$2000. Since being housed, these individuals haven’t spent a single night in jail. In addition to the grant from the Phillips Foundation, Partners for Ending Homeless will need to secure an estimated \$2.5 million over the next four years from public and private sources to expand the program in order to serve every “chronically” homeless individual in Guilford County. According to a prepared statement from the Partnership to end Homelessness.

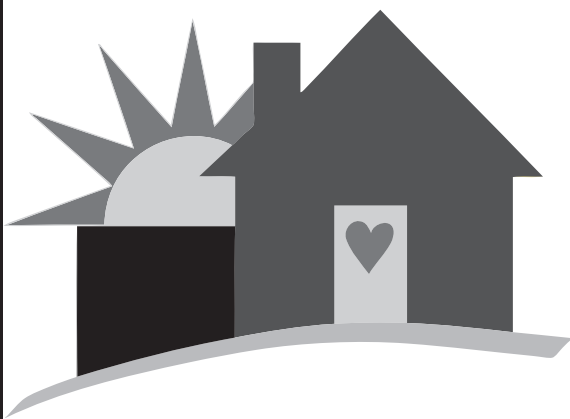
The truth of the matter is that as of January 2014, 850 people were considered homeless in Guilford County. 107 of them were “**chronically homeless**,” meaning they’d been homeless for more than a year and had a disability. Those identified as chronically homeless will be supported in finding housing and be provided with case workers and mental health support. However, before one can discuss the validity of an organization like Partners for Ending Homelessness, there must be a clear understanding of its role and purpose.

PEH is an organization in Guilford County that operates under the designation of the federal government to lead and direct data collection (compile, rank, score, and

submit) and apply for and distribute local, state, and federal grants to local agencies that provide services and support to the homeless population. Some of the organizations that funds are allotted to include: Open Door Ministries High Point, Greensboro Housing Authority, City of High Point, Servant Center, Greensboro Urban Ministries, Family Services of the Piedmont, and Youth Focus. Partners Ending Homelessness also provides free training to case management teams and frontline staff for this population.

While there are no magic formulas to eradicate the typical misfortunes that often occur in life that result in individuals and families being displaced from permanent housing, Partners Ending Homeless along with the United Way of Greensboro have rallied the community together to become a model for the entire state. At best, the underlying mission of the “Housing First” initiative can perhaps be seen as a partnership of community, churches, foundations, and the like joining forces to support those cases of homelessness that are the most complex and most difficult: mental health and substance abuse.

Thus, “Housing First” is an initiative not just to provide housing, but long-term housing which produces more stability. Surely there are numerous ideas about how to effectively end this age-old problem during these modern times; however, as the Native American proverb says: “No tree has branches so foolish as to fight amongst themselves.” As we grow closer to a “we” community and further from a “me” community, we will end homelessness in our community and become a true demonstration of how team work makes the dream work!!!



**INTERACTIVE
RESOURCE
CENTER**

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.



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gsodaycenter.org (336)332-0824

The Indomitable Anita Gilmore

by Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater

*"Need somebody that you can talk to,
that's why I'm glad I found Anita.
Anita is always there, the answers to my prayers"*

From *"I want to be like Anita"*
By Dave Fox from the Healing Blues



Anita Gilmore has many descriptors: formerly incarcerated, mother of three, volunteer and board member of the Interactive Resource Center, The Greensboro Voice and winner of the Writer of the Month award. A believer that God can change your life. She is known, as the song says, to understand the pain of others. Those who know Anita find her indomitable: she is a living Wonder Woman. She's a small slender woman whose experiences are large. My interview with Anita took place at the home where we recorded the story of some of the many aspects of her unique life with multiple disabilities and ended with a discussion of Orange is the New Black on prison life.

"My grandbaby saved me," Anita told me. Anita said that Tanisha, who was nine years old at the time, called 911 for Anita just in time for an operation for an aorta dissection repair. "If it had been five minutes later I was told, I wouldn't be here today." Anita's operation did in fact keep her alive but she now has multiple disabilities connected with the original heart problem. Anemia, asthma, pulmonary disease, high blood pressure, hyperthyroidism, bronchitis, and borderline diabetes are the many health challenges she faces. Anita is a dialysis patient four days a week and is on the waiting list for a kidney so that she can get a new heart. Anita's heart beats at 20% of the regular rate. She currently has a pacemaker and a defibrillator. Speaking about her physical limitations, Anita says, "It's part of life and I deal with it. God never let me down. He's not going to give me more than I can handle."

Anita did not always attribute her life decisions to God's help. When she was on the street in New York she was in the clutch of a controlled substance that ruled her. At that time in her life she said, "I was too close to the mirror to see what God could see in me." It was in New York City that trouble rose its ugly head in the shape of a kingpin drug dealer who was also the father of two of Anita's children. At first, Anita didn't know her partner was dealing drugs; she thought his money came from the six liquor stores and eight car garages that he owned. "He didn't want me to know about his business," she confided. "I was a square back then. I went to work every day. And he had a henchman follow me. This lack of knowledge about his job lasted for a year until he knew that I could be trusted." Anita fell into doing drugs herself and found the life exciting: "He was 'The Connect.' And we lived like

the families in the godfather. He bought me a Corvette Sting Ray right from the showroom with cash. He bought me every kind of fur coat, always top of the line, and he never went to jail."

Anita did go to jail. She took the fall for her husband and went to prison twice. As soon as she was released the first time, she immediately got high and got back into the business. However, she made a big mistake and crossed the state line so they sent her to Federal prison the second time. There she told me she really had to watch her back. "I wouldn't wish prison on anybody," She said. "You go inside that gate, there is no turning back. You can live or die in there." It was in prison that Anita said she found religion and that is what saved her when she came out."

"God's grace and mercy are why I am here now," Anita shared. On February, 2009, after her heart operation, when she could no longer work, Anita's family brought her to North Carolina where her father, sister and brother lived. They felt she couldn't do much because they didn't understand her disability. "I got on the number 9 bus from my sister's house," Anita said, "along with my medication and two bags of clothes and went to Weaver House. They told me that they had only one bed left and I got it." At the Weaver House, Anita joined others in a Women's Group which met on Tuesday nights and was led by the Stephens Ministry. "We talked," Anita explained. "We asked, 'What's going on with you?' We supported one another. Some of the homeless wanted to get their lives together and others were just trying to get by. You have to live by the rules and regulations of the shelter. Lights on at 5:30, breakfast at 7:00, and you must be back by 8:00 pm and not one minute after." While at the Weaver House, Anita

s: formerly homeless and for-
multiple disabilities, mother of
ce Staffing Agency, writer for
ward, gospel singer, and a be-
above suggests, for her ability
her spirit and energy indomi-
oman but her worldview and
ne IRC in a small room where
usual life. We began with her
he New Black, a Netflix series

took advantage of every program offered
by the Salvation Army and by the Interac-
tive Resource Center.

I asked Anita if she could tell from sim-
ply talking to a homeless person whether
or not they are willing to live by the rules.
“Sure,” she said, referring to the guests
at the IRC. “If they say they need a bus
pass to go to an interview, I ask what in-
terview where? No one can run the game
on me. Been there, done that.” Yet Anita
does have empathy for the homeless at the
Interactive Resource Center. “They are in
the same situation I was in,” she said. “We
are the same. I am fortunate to have skills
gained from my many jobs and I am very
educated.” Anita attended Trenton State
College and she is a member of Delta Sig-
ma Theta Sorority. Every time a job was
offered to her to further her education,
Anita took it. She worked as an aide at
United Cerebral Palsy for nine years, and
rose to become an administrator. She also
worked as a bank teller, a camp counselor,
and at a collection agency where she be-
came a supervisor.

Anita carries her work ethic into her
volunteer position at the IRC. There she
does whatever is need: cooking, escorting
guests to appointments, providing guided
tours of the IRC, writing for The Greens-
boro Voice, and being a good listener to
the homeless.

She knows about being controlled by
drugs, she knows about living in a shel-
ter, she knows about prison life, and she
knows about physical pain. She knows
about her own faith and how it has seen
her through many difficult times. If you
don’t already know Anita Gilmore, go and
meet her at the IRC. She’ll welcome you
and tell you stories about her life peppered
with her favorite phrase, “You know what
I mean?”

A New Stop and a New Outlook

by Clarette Sutton



After two years of running to catch
the bus and getting drenched in the
dreary rain, Route 13 has a much needed
new bus stop. In May of 2014, Greensboro
Voice Reporter, Clarette Sutton made a re-
quest for a Bus Stop in a neighborhood she
frequents. In Greensboro, Route 12 and
Route 13 services the Greensboro Urban
Ministry, Salvation Army, and Goodwill
Industries. These are places many home-
less and low income people frequent. On
Route 13, there is an inbound bus stop
near Martin Luther King Jr. and the next
one is at Arlington Street. Many patrons
have to struggle up and down hills to get
to the bus stops. Outbound was just as

bad, there was one located at Arlington
Street and the next one was almost four
blocks away.

After seeing many disabled people at
bus stops and struggling to the current
stops, Clarette decided to do something.
After reading a pamphlet about get-
ting a new bus stop she sent the request
to GTA. She was out of town and was
returning and pulled the string and the
driver said, “Right here.” She looked out
the window and BEHOLD as bright as
day a new bus stop had been placed in
the area she requested. Now, the elderly
and disabled can get on and off the bus
near Bellevue. On October 28, 2014,
there were four people waiting to get on
at that stop and one was a wheel chair cli-
ent. Deborah, stated that she had been
trying for three years to get a stop in the
area. I told her it took me six months.

So if you need to go to the Martin Luther
King and Asheboro area, there is a new stop.

If you need another stop in your area,
request for services to the City of Greens-
boro Public Transportation Division. You
can do so by the following methods:

-New Route Requests must include a let-
ter stating the reason the new service is
necessary along with the proposed loca-
tion and the times of day or week the
service is necessary.

-Letters from businesses or
organizations must be provided
on letterhead. You may also submit a

petition if you wish, signed by all con-
cerned parties. The petition should in-
clude names, addresses, phone numbers
and email addresses.

-New Stop Requests must include a letter
stating the reason the new stop is necessary
and the proposed location.

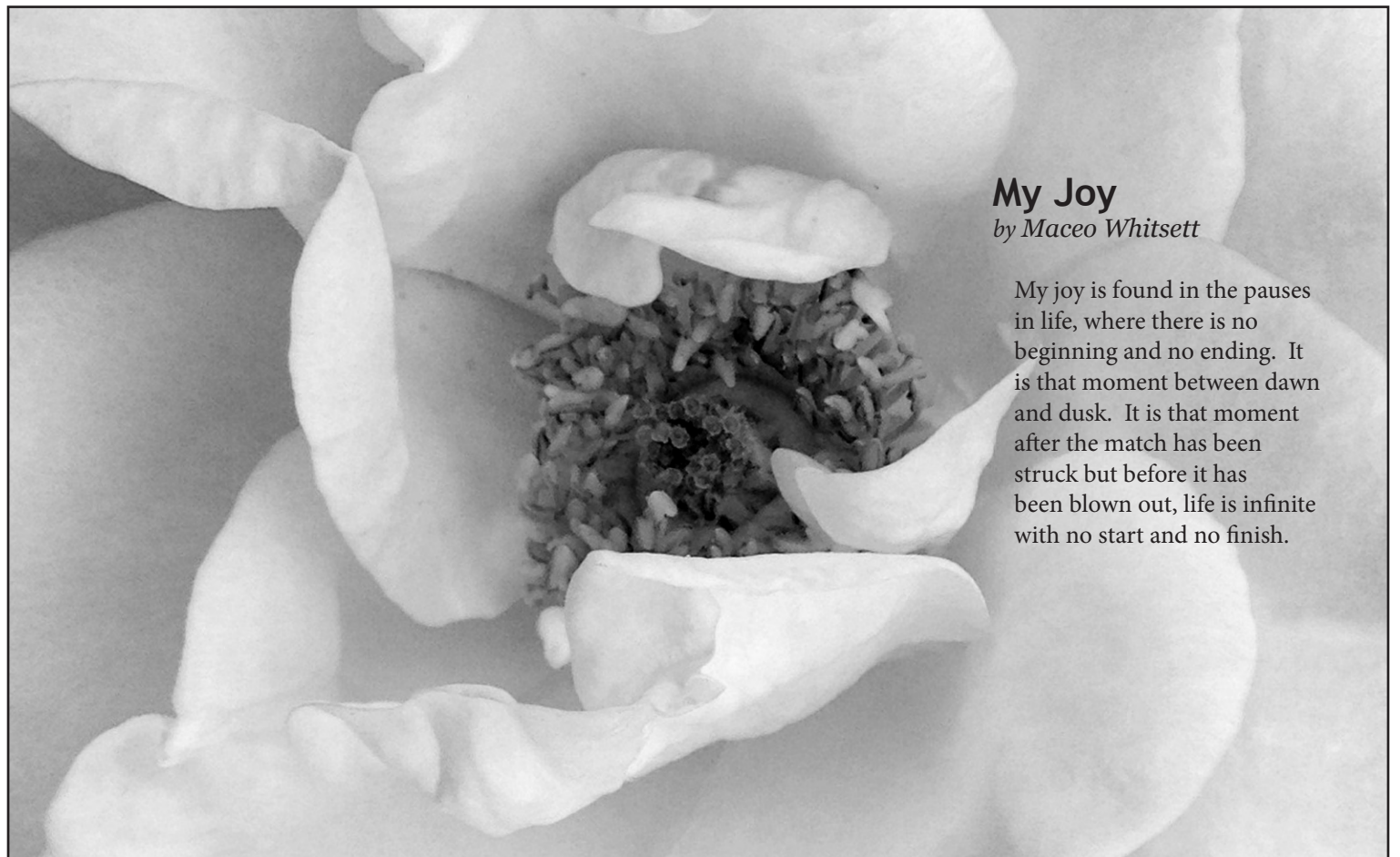
What to send and what to expect:

-Once your request is received by our
transit planners, we will review the feasi-
bility of your request given current sched-
uling and vehicle availability. We will also
look at safety issues as well as the effect
your request may have on other riders.

-The review process requires a minimum
of 30 days for a new bus stop and 60 days
for a new route. New route requests take
longer because they are subject to citizen
input through surveys and public meetings,
ridership surveys, impact studies, public
hearings and evaluation by the Service Eval-
uation Committee and the GTA Board.

-By the end of the 30 or 60 days, you should
receive a formal response from GTA regard-
ing your service request. Please be advised
that although your request may be confirmed
as a service need, it may be applied to the list
of GTA priority service projects subject to the
availability of funding and other resources.

What you will receive – either mail or
self deliver to GTA - 223 W. Meadowview
Road, Greensboro, NC 27406 or fax to
373-2809, or you can submit it online at
www.ridegta.com.



My Joy

by Maceo Whitsett

My joy is found in the pauses
in life, where there is no
beginning and no ending. It
is that moment between dawn
and dusk. It is that moment
after the match has been
struck but before it has
been blown out, life is infinite
with no start and no finish.



Cloud Ship

by Bob Norfleet

Only a moment ago I dreamt of simple fishing
Along this sweet shore.
Of wind sweeping gently across my line.
No flounder nor whiting of hook this early morning.
Then behold....this ship....my ship appears!

A cloud ship!
Bringing some treasure to other eyes as she moves?
She goes large and fast across the Atlantic!
From what port did she sail?
I imagine she will not tell nor where she ends.

Oh, stay this memory of so glorious a sight!
From the breath of red sky she moves, my dark cloud ship!
She sails of wind quietly and southwardly
But loudly bragging her starboard across
Wrightsville's calm shore! See me, oh land!

Tomorrow, sailors take warning!

THE GREENSBORO VOICE
Help start the conversation!

The Greensboro Voice Has a New Mailing Address

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

What is the official definition of homelessness?

There is more than one "official" definition of homelessness. Health centers funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) use the following:

A homeless individual is defined in section 330(h)(5)(A) as "an individual who lacks housing (without regard to whether the individual is a member of a family), including an individual whose primary residence during the night is a supervised public or private facility (e.g., shelters) that provides temporary living accommodations, and an individual who is a resident in transitional housing." A homeless person is an individual without permanent housing who may live on the streets; stay in a shelter, mission, single room occupancy facilities, abandoned building or vehicle; or in any other unstable or non-permanent situation. [Section 330 of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C., 254b)]

An individual may be considered to be homeless if that person is "doubled up," a term that refers to a situation where individuals are unable to maintain their housing situation and are forced to stay with a series of friends and/or extended family members. In addition, previously homeless individuals who are to be released from a prison or a hospital may be considered homeless if they do not have a stable housing situation to which they can return. A recognition of the instability of an individual's living arrangements is critical to the definition of homelessness. (HRSA/Bureau of Primary Health Care, Program Assistance Letter 99-12, Health Care for the Homeless Principles of Practice)

Programs funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) use a different, more limited definition of homelessness [found in the Homeless Emergency Assistance and Rapid Transition to Housing Act of 2009 (P.L. 111-22, Section 1003)].

- An individual who lacks a fixed, regular, and adequate nighttime residence;
- An individual who has a primary nighttime residence that is a public or private place not designed for or ordinarily used as a regular sleeping accommodation for human beings, including a car, park, abandoned building, bus or train station, airport, or camping ground;
- An individual or family living in a supervised publicly or privately operated shelter designated to provide temporary living arrangements (including hotels and motels paid for by Federal, State or local government programs for low-income individuals or by charitable organizations, congregate shelters, and transitional housing);
- An individual who resided in a shelter or place not meant for human habitation and who is exiting an institution where he or she temporarily resided;
- An individual or family who will imminently lose their housing [as evidenced by a court order resulting from an eviction action that notifies the individual or family that they must leave within 14 days, having a primary nighttime residence that is a room in a hotel or motel and where they lack the resources necessary to reside there for more than 14 days, or credible evidence indicating that the owner or renter of the housing will not allow the individual or family to stay for more than 14 days, and any oral statement from an individual or family seeking homeless assistance that is found to be credible shall be considered credible evidence for purposes of this clause]; has no subsequent residence identified; and lacks the resources or support networks needed to obtain other permanent housing; and
- Unaccompanied youth and homeless families with children and youth defined as homeless under other Federal statutes who have experienced a long-term period without living independently in permanent housing, have experienced persistent instability as measured by frequent moves over such period, and can be expected to continue in such status for an extended period of time because of chronic disabilities, chronic physical health or mental health conditions, substance addiction, histories of domestic violence or childhood abuse, the presence of a child or youth with a disability, or multiple barriers to employment.

Hence different agencies use different definitions of homelessness, which affect how various programs determine eligibility for individuals and families at the state and local level. Health centers use the HHS definition in providing services.

National Health Care for the Homeless Council
(Printed with permission)

Short takes with Anita: A collection of stories

By Anita Gilmore



Anita Gilmore is a guest at the Interactive Resource Center (IRC). Every month she talks to people experiencing homelessness and collects their stories. This month I bring to you a variety of Short Takes from all aspects of homeless life with a truth serum. Take a look and read!

Keep Your Head Up

I moved from South Carolina to North Carolina to stay with my sister. Before long, she and I began having serious differences so she kicked me out. I lost everything, even my job. I stayed on the street for only one day because I called the Greensboro Urban Ministry and thank God, they had one remaining bed at the Weaver House. I stayed at Weaver for about two months. During that time I tried to figure out my next move.

One day while at Weaver House, I learned about the Interactive Resource Center, or IRC, on East Washington Street. The IRC provides day services for people like me. After my time was up at Weaver, I found a group called Joseph's House and I stayed there for about six months. Each day, I continued to go to the IRC where I took a Job Skills Class. I also signed up as a volunteer which I really loved.

On September 2013 God blessed me with my own place and I don't have to pay any bills. My trials and tribulations finally turned into a "happy ever after". That was when I met Miss Anita who coached and motivated me and told me about God. I began to hang out with her. She helped put food and furniture into my apartment. I watched how she went to dialysis and many hospital visits for her health, but she continued to volunteer and take me around town. I said to myself that as young as I am, I need to get it together. She really was an inspiration to me. I learned a lot. I am now enrolled in Virginia College and hope to find a career for myself. I really want to thank God for placing good people in my life and may God bless them all. I know for sure that I can do anything and I like to say, "Keep your head up and remember you put the foot forward and God will do the rest." Please put me in your prayers.

—Jamie Pressley

When Your Chips are Down

This past November, I finally decided to change my lifestyle. I participated in the Chicken Walk. There I met a friend of mine who also was an uncle to a former classmate that went to high school with me. We started going to church together and he talked to me about how I could live a better life than what I was subjected to.. During Christmas, my friend Tim Gosage reached out to a bunch of my old high school friends. Since December they gave me a nice winter coat, new clothes from Old Navy and my aunt even helped out.

From November through February 4th I stayed at the Weaver House, an emergency winter shelter. At that time, my friend, Tim recommend that it was best that i go into the shelter at the Salvation Army because of financial reasons. There I was accepted to the Housing First program. Their caseworkers immediately began to work on helping me find my own apartment. I only stayed at the Salvation Army until the end of March when I moved into my new apartment at Dogwood Creek Apartments. I then received some of my grandparents furniture. At the beginning of April, I finally won my disability case and I could not be more happy than I am right now especially after so many people here in Greensboro kept telling me I wasn't going to be able win my case.

I feel so blessed to finally start receiving my disability benefits and now have enough money to keep my place. My friend, Tim and my godmother, Mitzi kept telling me, "Keep praying about it and something good will happen". I am so lucky to have a good life now. Others can have it too if they pray hard enough and wish as hard as they can. Impossible things are happening every day. If you think things are tough and your chips are down, God always makes a way. In closing, I want to thank Tim, Mitzi and all my friends from Northwest Guilford High School for helping me get to where I need to be.

— David Pigue

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 e-mail us at greensborovoice@gmail.com.

Bill and Anna Heroy Old Photo Specialist

Since 1971

320 S. Elm St, Greensboro, NC

Wishes the
Interactive Resource Center

*Absolute Success in
The Elimination of Homelessness for
MEN, WOMEN AND CHILDREN
in Greensboro, NC*

A City of Compassion!

THE GREENSBORO VOICE THANKS OUR "LISTENERS"

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Taylor Shain	Bob Langenfeld
Carol Owen	Mr. & Mrs. ED Mann
Jim Ingram	Anne & Sam Hummel
Nancy Myers	Dr. Denise Baker
Parker Washburn	Charles Austin
Thaddeus Seymour	Kathy Sohn
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Will & Victoria Duffy	New Generation's Lion's Club
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Teresa & Bill Hicks	Allison Swafford
Eileen Prufer	Joyce Powers
Carolyn Graves	Steve Schlosser

WE ARE GRATEFUL
FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Tent Cities Closed

by Stephaine Thomas

Most Greensboro residents were not aware of them. They were hidden, down a dirt path, off a back road, or off a main road, behind a church, a retail store, or an abandoned building, on other wise unused land. For the men and women who lived in these “tent cities”, it was their home. For many of us, living in a tent in all kinds of weather without proper sanitation, would be unbearable. But, for too many of our displaced citizens it was the best option they felt they had. Now that option is gone. This summer, the city of Greensboro closed the tent cities. The staff at The Greensboro Voice, having known people who lived there, were concerned about their well being and whereabouts.

Amy Murphy feeds the homeless every Monday in Center City Park. She has her finger, or rather, her heart, on the pulse of the homeless community. I asked her about the recent closings of the tent cities, and what had happened to the people who had been living there. Amy told me that only a few of the individuals had been housed through the Housing First program. One individual had gone to hospice, and others were living in the woods, under bridges, with one man living in a cardboard box.

Not everyone in our society is able to get a job or hold down a job. There are a multitude of reasons why some individuals can't work including physical illness and disabilities, emotional and mental illness, a criminal history, and drug addiction. Plus reduction in factory jobs has added to the problem.

To make things worse, our homeless shelters have a waiting list and a time limit on stay. After a person runs out of time at the shelter, sleeping outside is there only choice. It's an awful prospect for them to face. One man in particular committed suicide when he ran out of time at one of our local shelters.

We spend a lot of money in this city on a variety of improvement projects. The time has come for us to improve our homeless shelters. No one should ever have to sleep outside.

Still from Jagmeet Mac's *Walter's Walk*- <http://vimeo.com/92989430>

The World Behind the Brick wall

by William Boyd

A wall for everything
you will get lost
when you've arrived
at the place behind the brick wall.
At first the brick wall seems like
its blocking you.
But later you find an old
back door with a platinum knob.
The words are Sanskrit.
You can smell fresh food
and hear people chatting.
“A young woman runs by you.”
The wind from the other side ushers
The door open.
You blink, but open your eyes.
A roman world of Gorgans
Passes by you.
You are stone.
The door shuts once again.

Community Resources

SHELTER

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)
1600 E. Wendover Avenue
336-389-9880
Hotline: 336-558-1695

MEALS

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 Mul-lin 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
1600 E. Wendover 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
2200 East Market Street Suite B
336-510-9292

Malachi House II
3603 Burlington Road
336-375-0900

OTHER RESOURCES
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
336-501-6570 or 965-8739
Open Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.
Saturday from 10:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Goodwill Industries
1235 S. Eugene Street
336-275-9801

Community Resources

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

Renewal Center for Battered Women

Brenda McGibbone, Nessbaum Ceter
336-988-7622

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

Shakin' the Soul: The Healing Blues Project

by Alabama Stone



Steven Headen from Lawyers, Guns, and Money poses with Shannon Stewart.

We all know the Blues. Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf, Big Mamma Thornton, Bessie Smith, B.B. King—we all know the Blues. If asked to define the genre, we would consider it music that shakes the soul and tells a story. Love, loss, and heartache—trials and tribulations, blues music shows how everyone has a story to tell. The Interactive Resource Center in downtown Greensboro serves as a homeless day center to the public. The IRC offers programs that are essential in assisting guests with tools to further their success. The IRC is also known for being an art centered and creative outlet for the community it serves, which is how the Healing Blues project came to life.

Musicians and writers paired with guests at the IRC to create songs inspired by their stories and experiences surround-

ing homelessness. The storytellers did not hold back while sharing their experiences with the musicians and writers. They included their experiences with addiction, PTSD, prison, poverty, and homelessness, to create this collaborative art project. The result of this innovative art project was the funds raised for The Interactive Resource center and a full-length album; additionally, the concerts served as a way to raise awareness of the homeless community, while educating the audience about ways to become involved.

The Healing Blues musicians showcased their music through three concerts in Greensboro. The album release party took place at Greensboro College on October 5th. The auditorium was set, filled with supporters, fans, and the storytellers that met with the musicians. Storyteller, Shannon Stewart had heard his song in the beginning stages of its creation; however he had not heard the final production with the band. Lawyers, Guns, and Money fit the genres of R&B, Blues, Motown, and Classic Rock, upholding their fame in the blues music scene. Band members Terry VunCannon, Mike Thomas, and Steve Headen are a talented group of men that have been recognized by many and have an enthusiastic fan base. Lawyers, Guns, and Money were the 2013 winners of the Piedmont Blues Preservation Society Blues Challenge Band, and have since been playing shows and collaborating with other musicians. Shannon was thrilled to work with these guys and it was evident as he watched the performance with a smile and his head bobbing to the music. His story of growing up and facing homelessness at a young age is what inspired the song. The jamming on the slide guitar, bass, and drums, the band begins:

"I hit the streets at ten years old, you're going with your dad is what I was told. He lost our home, my path was clear, I was a walkin' man, you cant stay here. Halfway house, picture ID, that's all my daddy could give to me, I'm walkin'. This worn out cross hanging around my neck, the things you say when your life is a wreck. I'm a man of peace, just let me be."

Lawyers, Guns, and Money had a stage presence that rocked the auditorium and impacted us all. While introducing Shannon's song, bassist and lead singer Steven Headen pulled at his shirt collar and pulled out a necklace. Headen leans into the mic, "This right here is Shannon's necklace. This is what has gotten him through the hard times in the past, I'm going to wear this for him tonight. This is for you Bud."

The concert series stood out to the city of Greensboro and highlighted the lives of guest and clients at the IRC. The Healing Blues project and concerts entertained, raised funds for the IRC, and educated the community on people experiencing homelessness and how to contribute to alleviating homelessness. The power of music and the collaborative effort from storytellers and musicians reinforced the idea that everyone has a story. Homeless or not, we all have a beginning, middle, and a future to our life story. Experience, knowledge, and the power of art is what made The Healing Blues project a memorable and heartwarming event.

To purchase The Healing Blues band CD and online download visit: www.cdbaby.com/cd/thehealingblues

Check out Lawyers, Guns, and Money at: www.reverbNation.com/lawyersgunsmoney or find them on Facebook.

DONATION

THE GREENSBORO VOICE

The Greensboro Voice Newspaper gives homeless and low income people the chance to develop their artistic skills by having their stories, poetry and artwork published in our newspaper.

We assist our writers in finding their voice while helping our readers understand what it's like to battle homelessness, addiction, and mental illness.

But in order for The Greensboro Voice to be able to publish these stories we need your support. We are asking our readers to help us raise funds this year so we can keep this newspaper running. By making a donation to the Voice you will be ensuring that the stories of the homeless are heard across the city.

Your donation will help with:

- Writing materials
- Printing and publishing costs
- Program costs
- Stipend for homeless and low income writers

Donating is easy

Please take a moment and send a check payable to: The Greensboro Voice, 1852 Banking Street #9252, Greensboro NC 27408

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

If so, please e-mail our team at greensborovoice@gmail.com and we will include your information on our Community Resources page!

Help start the conversation!