

## An Example of Unselfish Regard for Homeless Ex-Prisoners

by Bill K.



Jericho House is a not-too-well-known Greensboro ministry for those at risk of being homeless upon their release from prison. Part of the reason they are not too well known is the humble attitude of its operators. They are Christian and treat every resident as though they truly believe “There but for the grace of God go I”. The operators are not exclusive in their service to those of dissimilar faith, as long as a resident agrees to abide by Christian principles in their treatment of one another and staff during their stay. The intent of the operators of Jericho House is probably best summarized in their mission statement:

*The purpose of Jericho House is to provide a seven month intensive residential recovery community for men coming out of prison. Our goal is to help these men have a successful transition back into society. We are a Christian program, with a strong emphasis on building a solid spiritual foundation. Jericho House can accommodate up to six residents.*

As a resident myself, I am exceedingly thankful that such a charity even exists. Particularly so, because I’m too old and disabled to be trying to sleep under a bridge in the kind of weather we’ve had lately. I find both staff and fellow residents to be quite welcoming and tolerant in their dealings with me. Though they expect a fellow to make an effort to pay at least part of his way after the first month, the staff have demonstrated a willingness to work with a resident as long as he continues to make an obvious commitment to improve his life.

I was amazed to find the home to be neat, clean, comfortable, and in good shape upon my arrival. The folks in charge seem to demonstrate well a commitment to do a lot with little. Any and all contributions seem to be well spent. This is to the credit not only of the operators, but to the obvious difference the program at Jericho House has made in the lives of the residents here.

The intake binder given to every resident shortly after his arrival contains a well-thought-out structured outline for life planning, covering the topics of “general information”, “starting”, “employment”, “money”, and the contract the new resident is expected to sign which indicates his commitment to make some very positive changes in his life. However, with the exception of the contract, most of the details are left blank, because the resident is encouraged to take charge of his own life, customize his own plan, and progress to the point where he no longer needs the control of the prison environment with someone standing over him, telling him every significant move to make. Our society needs more programs like this one. As well, there needs to be more concerted effort to utilize the experienced knowledge of graduates of such programs in honest efforts to prevent the homelessness problem from the start. You may forward your comments to my e-mail address: will.m.k@hotmail.com. Feedback is welcome.

*Bill K., a traumatically-stressed ex-cop turned homeless mental patient is now well into recovery and looking to use his pen to encourage and enable people to find their solutions to life’s challenges*

## Seven Years and a Wake-Up A Prisoner’s Progress From Incarceration To Re-Entry

by ZAZEN

“...a person who has paid a debt to society and worked to expand their knowledge and better themselves deserves to work in dignified manner of their choosing just as much as anyone else.”

The writer has taken on the responsibility of producing an essay that highlights the difficulties of transitioning from life as ward of a state correctional institution to a returning citizen of regular society. This writing could have manifested under a different name entirely, but given that I have personal experience in the subject matter, it may have been considered derelict of me as a contributing member of this newspaper’s staff not to offer my perspective on the issue. Having said that, I would like everyone reading this to understand that my individual experience is unique and may not reflect the opinions of others who have not experienced the topic first-hand or those who have been in similar circumstances. The final verdict on my post-release movement toward resettlement has not and cannot be written, and my journey is still very much a work in progress.

One item that should be shared is that I was incarcerated in Ohio, not North Carolina. There must be differences in the process of criminal prosecution and attitudes toward released former inmates to consider. The history between my father and myself was conflicted; in 2008 I was arrested for stabbing him multiple times with a kitchen knife. Although the incident was domestic and no charges were filed on my father’s behalf, the state picked up the case and indicted me. In early 2009, I accepted a plea bargain of two counts of felonious assault and one count of attempted murder in exchange for a three year sentence ran and five years of post-release supervision under the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction. Adding time served for my stint in the local county jail, I completed my sentence and was released in 2011. Subsequently, I have been free for nearly four years, soon to be seven years removed from my criminal offense, and almost one year away from completing my probationary period. I attempted to reestablish myself in Ohio for over two years before finally having my probation transferred to the south in NC’s Piedmont-Triad region.

My expectations for re-entry were always rooted in the reality of my situation. But nothing could have truly prepared me for

the forcible push-back I received while attempting to secure myself a modest occupation. I realize that the nature of my crime immediately causes eyebrows to raise, but I feel that the employers, businesses and corporations who look at the felony record as a liability rather than attempting to view the circumstances in their whole context are displaying a tendency towards discrimination in their employment practices. Today, there are incentives being introduced that will alleviate some of the pressure on returning ex-offenders and provide tax breaks to businesses who take on the responsibility for providing the systematically disadvantaged with a means of income. But it will not ensure that those with multiple infractions and handicaps have a fair opportunity to be considered on an equal footing with others who may have a clean(er) record.

Since my release from prison, I can honestly say that I have possessed two official jobs. The first was while I was still in Ohio, nearly a year after my release. After repeated attempts to apply at a local linen cleaning service and receiving no response, I was finally able to get my foot in the door only after I had entered into homeless shelter-status and my parole officer at the time had intervened to help me find employment. As a linen “sorter,” I worked for two months before resigning under difficulties adjusting to the environment and meeting occupational expectations. In other words, the stress and desperation of the factory’s atmosphere overcame me. It wasn’t until the end of 2014, almost a year after I had arrived in High Point, NC., that I was able to get a second job through a temporary staffing agency at a furniture framing business. I was dropped into a seemingly low-skilled labor position as an assembler of mattress frames, apparently to replace a long-time employee of thirty-plus years who was slowing down as his age increased. They needed new blood and as a designated “floor specialist” in training, I was to cover various aspects of maintaining productivity.

I did not last more than two days before I relieved myself of the job. I wasn’t up to

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## 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!

## This edition was produced by:

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## Opinion

I am responding to the front page open letter by Amy Murphy that appeared in the last issue of *The Greensboro Voice*. I feel her analysis of the Weaver House was too harsh. The non-profit organizations trying to help the homeless with temporary shelter and food in Greensboro often lack sufficient funds and resources to complete their mission. This includes the Weaver House at the Greensboro Urban Ministry on Lee Street.

The staff and volunteers at Greensboro Urban Ministry assist many individuals and families in this community by providing temporary shelter and food during the year, especially during the cold months.

It seems unfair to “set-up” the already stressed shelter employees and volunteers by

bringing in a large number of homeless individuals unannounced. A quick phone call to the Urban Ministry or the management at the Weaver House, requesting appointments before the visit, might have brought more realistic results and perhaps a better outcome.

I understand the point the writer was trying to make: Many people are sleeping outside in the winter, a fact most Greensboro residents have been unaware. It's vital that we inform so that more help can be made available with an increase in donations. On the other hand, the same information could have been acquired and shared in a positive way.

Stephanie Thomas,  
Assistant Editor, *The Greensboro Voice*

## The IRC Holds Dignity Event

by Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater

On Thursday April 30th the Interactive Resource Center held a fund raiser titled “The Dignity Event” to raise funds to support the staff and guests at the IRC. Music played by The Healing Blues Project filled the rooms while donors took self-guided tours of the IRC and nibbled on specialty foods and desserts provided by local restaurants such as Deep Roots, the Painted Plate, Grey's Tavern, 1618 Wine Lounge and others. Deidre James, community organizer, served as moderator for the event, introducing speakers and musicians who talked about and played songs about the homeless community. Michelle Kennedy, the IRC's Executive Director, thanked NewBridge Bank for its donation of a commercial washer and dryer and announced a new grant awarded to the IRC. Kennedy explained the further

needs faced by the small staff of seven paid members who run the IRC along with the help of many volunteers, emphasizing that with additional monetary donations they may be able to hire new staff and offer new programs such as financial literacy classes. Kennedy stressed that everyone benefits from helping people experiencing homelessness--“There is room at the table for all of us,” she said.

The silent auction winners ended the evening with many people walking away with baskets of donated goods, plants, puzzles, musical instruments, rain barrels and note cards drawn by guests of the IRC. Participants were encouraged to take away care packages to give away to anyone they meet on the street in need of help. *The Greensboro Voice* was mentioned as one of the many innovative programs offered at the Interactive Resource Center.

## Thanks Alabama

The staff of *The Greensboro Voice* would like to thank Alabama Stone for her work with the newspaper as an intern with the English Department at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro. Her work in community outreach and marketing as well as her contributions as a reporter and writer, have been influential to our paper and to our community. She has written poetry for our newspaper and has had her work published in several literary magazines and journals, among them UNCG's *Corradi*. She recently had the opportunity to be an official poet in the “PoMoSco Project,” while working with *The Found Poetry Review*. Alabama has accepted an offer to attend North Carolina State University, where she will receive her Master of Fine Arts in Poetry. We are proud of her for continuing her love and passion for poetry and writing and for being chosen for such a selective program. She will be working with the famous poets Dorianne Laux and John Balaban to receive creative guidance and discipline as a writer. We will miss her liveliness and unconventional ideas and wish her the best. To the right is a sample of her poetry.

## tobacco eau de Man

for Ellen Hopkins: thank you for art.

A perfect fiber, a tiny tendril,  
throbbed in my belly.  
Red & raw.  
We laid in bed sweating.  
Blind by fever and a meteorite.

Lately,  
it takes miles to get away.

As for me and  
my own sordid tale;  
Ecstasy dissolves all fear. Behave.  
I am the mistress of persuasion,  
of sweet-talk and summer insanity.

He was all hands.  
Proximity unsettling,  
the consolation of touch, and  
my mouth to gag down  
his whispers. One look, he knew.  
The bastard.  
you're a strange girl  
—but I'd like to get to know you.

Sonofabitch, I wanted to rage.  
Calling for a fractured psyche  
and the urge to dance.

To fall into rhythm.  
The urge I have  
to pollute my lungs with you.  
Tobacco and eau de Man.

# 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



## To Dive or Not to Dive

by Clarette Sutton



There is much wasted food in Greensboro even though there are also many food desserts. A food dessert is defined as an area where there is no grocery store within a two mile radius. Many of these desserts are in low income neighborhoods where people often go hungry. Less than a year ago Urban Ministries closed its food bank which left many non-profit agencies that help feed the hungry and poor in trouble. At the same time Guilford County Schools throws away tons of food each month. This food could help feed the hungry but there is a strict policy against this as well as against dumpster diving.

According to ([www.freegan.info](http://www.freegan.info)): "Dumpster diving is legal in the United States except there prohibited by local regulation." However, according to regulations about taking food from dumpsters: "[if] a dumpster is against a building or inside a fenced enclosure marked 'No Trespassing' you could be questioned, ticketed or even arrested by the police." According to Guilford County Schools, food taken from school dumpsters is considered theft. So rather than compost this waste and perhaps even start a school garden, the food is taken away. How can we begin to solve this problem?

*Clarette Sutton works in the cafeteria of a local school and has seen food waste first hand.*

## Seven Years and a Wake-Up

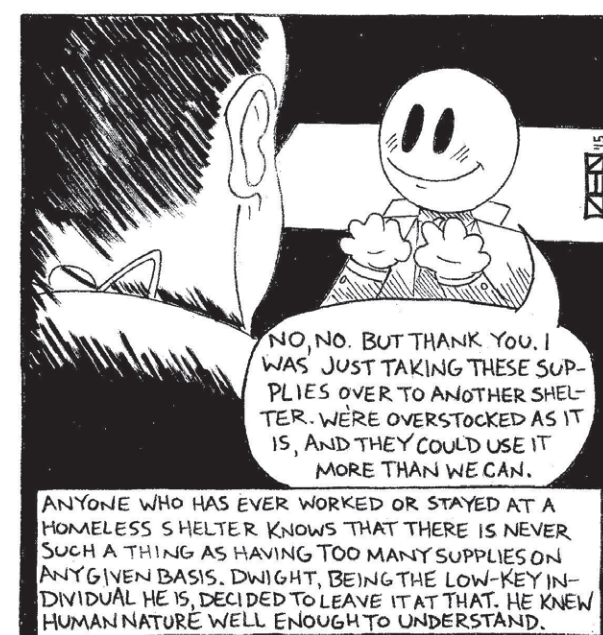
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the task of filling the shoes of a thirty-four year veteran while trying to fit into a two-man cooperative work flow with a partner (something I'm not accustomed to in the first place) who had been there for two years after being trained under my outgoing predecessor. What defines these situations is my lack of suitability in the factory/industrial setting. As I've grown older and acquired new skills on my own and in educational settings, my qualifications and competency should not restrict me to the manual labor sector. Some would say that as a person with a first-degree felony, I do not have the luxury to pick and choose which jobs I want to work in. To a certain extent, I would agree with them. However, why is it that businesses such as fast-food and retail chains, which carry positions that I actually do have experience in, refuse in most cases to even conduct an interview with me, thereby confining me to a narrow space where the only options are miserable wage-slave tasks with pay-rates that are a scant more than the state minimum requires or are based on back-breaking productivity schedules?

Walmart and Taco Bell do not require an advanced skill set for someone to be

hired by them. But at least one of them denied my application on the grounds of my felony record. Matters of driving capability and even, ironically, debt are being used to determine whether potential employees can carry out the most practical tasks. My issues with this subject go deeper than what I can fit in this small space, but I can at least say that I have recently undergone training and received multiple certifications in the Heating, Ventilation, Air Conditioning and Refrigeration trade as well as Forklift credentials, extending my qualifications even further. None of my efforts have yet yielded the opportunities I've worked for in the job market, but that's not to say I haven't been fortunate other areas. I'll continue to use the resources I do possess to bring attention to these matters, because until they are addressed fully then an increase in unemployment rates is inevitable, all due to a lack of understanding that a person who has paid a debt to society and worked to expand their knowledge and better themselves deserves to work in dignified manner of their choosing just as much as anyone else.

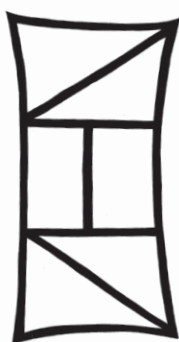
THE LAST HOMECOMING © 2015 ZAZEN



The March 2015 issue debuted a comic strip The Last Homecoming. The artist, who goes by the name Zazen, explains his approach to his work: "The name 'Zazen' came about last fall. The whole idea of anonymity goes back to my days doing graffiti; the word 'zazen' just jumped out at me. I have an interest in Japanese culture and lately have been delving into it further—The Samurai and the Sacred, Confucianism, Shintoism, spirituality. Zazen is a Buddhist concept, Japanese for "seated in meditation". I've done sitting meditation for half my life—it describes me, it's just something that sticks."

The conversation in this installment of The Last Homecoming came out of a conversation when Zazen was staying at a local shelter. "I pulled out my pen and pad—it was something I wanted to get down. I really just want to tell people's stories. I didn't want to do an overview of shelters; it's more important to get one person's experience. It's not my intent to do journalistic reporting. To me the purpose of the strip is to get people to tell a story, any story, from their life. Something that rings true with them, something that's inconsequential but can reach somebody somewhere."

"People are coming out of all kinds of situations and coming into the shelter with nothing. It's not right to take advantage of them. When you're on the street, not much matters. I want people to realize that this is an actual story about an actual thing that happened in a place that really exists, but also that it's across the board. I'll have two more strips about Dwight and then another cycle, another conversation with someone else. Most of all in the strip I want the feelings that I've had and that other people have had to come across."



## The Rest of the Story

by Chris Ward

The most interesting thing about a telling your story is that story never ends. As long as you live, that story changes, grows, and goes on. Even after you pass, that story isn't over; your life affects the story of those around you, and as such, even after you're gone, your life has influenced someone you may never meet.

It has been months since I last updated everyone on my own story, and things have changed. One thing that hasn't are the challenges I still find myself facing. When last we left off, I was in my own place.

It was December of 2014, and Christmas was fast approaching. I was looking forward to the holidays since I knew I would be getting to visit and spend some time with my family, something I had not really had the opportunity to do since before becoming homeless. I had missed my nieces terribly and could hardly wait to see how much they had grown. I can't remember the last time I had been feeling this great about life!

But then the phone rang, and all that changed. I answered the call, and it was the property owner who asked me about rent. I was confused at first because I have a housing voucher. I tried to explain this to the landlord. He informed me that not only had no rent been paid since I moved in, but they had also listed my home as "vacant." I was rocked.

I immediately started to investigate the situation. After making some calls, I determined that someone had not turned in the proper forms, and so I was facing an uncertain future at Christmas. I started wondering if I was about to be homeless again, back to where I started just a short year ago. My mind was reeling as I thought everything through. Soon, however, I was assured that the agency was going to work on fixing this situation and would be sending out a housing inspector. I dared to hope, but up until the day of the inspection I was unable to sleep due to my racing nerves. I was scared that something would go wrong.

The inspector arrived and I let her in. We talked, and she inspected. Then she informed me that she remembered visiting my address before but that she was unable to conduct her inspection, because the person who had been living in my home was in the process of moving out. I knew this to be untrue, since the original inspection was scheduled after I had already inspected this property. A mere 15 min-

utes later, as we were walking through the house, she made a comment about having gotten this far during her first inspection, which she had just told me she had been "unable to perform." I was left scratching my head, but did not make any comment. At the end of her visit, I was informed that this house had not passed her inspection. There were several minor things that she wanted changed or fixed. I became even more afraid. I thought, "What does this mean for my future?" I was left to worry all through the holidays.

So after Christmas, the landlord was able to have everything repaired and re-inspected, and the house passed. In January I was able to sign a new lease and thought all my problems were going to be behind me. I had been accepted to GTCC. This was the first time I had stepped foot in a proper classroom in over 15 years. Then I ran into another problem. Amazing how they spring up so suddenly and much too frequently when you live on the margins of society!

So I was now in school and was re-excited about my future because I had a part-time job at a call center for a non-profit charity. I wanted to be a full-time student, but because of the job, I only managed to get in as part time... or so I thought. I soon discovered that I had been misinformed by the college. My schedule made me one credit point shy of part time, which negatively affected my Pell Grant income. I started missing work and showing up late. I barely had enough time to breathe due to my studies and late work hours. I was falling behind in school, and it became a very difficult situation to be sure. It resulted in my having to take time off work until the semester was out. Of course, this severely affected my financial situation, but I tried not let this burden me. I kept up my hard work at college.

The next bad spot came after the snow storms hit. We had one of our rare pretty days and I had opened a window to let some fresh air in. It was night time, and I was awake. I had been up most of the night studying and had decided to relax a little

and watch a movie on my laptop. About 15 minutes had passed, and suddenly my house started filling up with smoke. My living room was on fire. Somehow my window curtain had been sat ablaze. Luckily no one was hurt, and the fire was put out as quickly as possible. Aside from a few things that were damaged and destroyed because of the fire, the overall damage was very light. However, the fire resulted in the need for the living room wall and window to be repainted and for the replacement of blinds and curtains. I was thankful that things had not been worse, but this was just the beginning of the month. The smoke was gone in my house, but it was to start again at college.

I was scheduled to start my new class in March. Among the things I lost in the fire had been my school schedule. I knew what day my class was supposed to start, but after viewing my classes on the internet, I received an email from a teacher that told me we would be meeting on a different day. I figured this was due to the school closing caused by the snow storms and that the class had just been delayed. However, when I went to the classroom, it was empty. By the time I got home, it was early evening, and I decided I would email the teacher the next morning to figure out what was going on with the schedule.

The next day, I returned home from school and found an email waiting in my inbox. The teacher informed me that I am not even listed for her class. This was strange because I saw my name on the student list, and I had received emails from this teacher. Upon further investigation though, we were able to determine that someone at the college had placed me in the wrong class. I was supposed to be in "Introduction to Communications," and yet the class showing up online was "Introduction to Public Speaking," both of which carrying the COM tag. I was not worried though. I knew this was just a misunderstanding that could be fixed. Then I received a letter from the school that told me I have to pay back my Pell grant. Wow, this is really shaping up to be a heckuva a year huh?

I know this update is getting a bit long, but stick with me. For this next part of the story, I will spare you most of the details and give you a brief overview on what happened next:

I went to the school and was told there was nothing that could be done. After speaking to many different people and departments over several weeks, we were finally able to resolve this issue, and I did

not have to pay back the Pell grant. The most worrisome part of the story here was that the school had told me that I would not be able to continue with school next year until I had paid back this Pell grant. Luckily, this part worked out. That is until I was supposed to be receiving the next installment for my student loan.

Remember how I told you I was a credit shy of being a part time student? Here's where that came back to bite me. Because of the mix-up with the class schedule, I ended up with less than six credit hours. This resulted in my being unable to get my student loan. So here I am, still trying to catch up with my bills and am almost there. When I was to receive my last check, my bills would not only be caught up, but I would be ahead on them.

Now we come to the most recent complication standing in my way. As many of you may imagine, I do receive EBT/Food Stamps. Many of the readers of this paper may receive them as well. I had to re-certify last month (April). Upon doing so, I was told that I do not qualify any longer for assistance. I was confused until I found out the reason. It seems that if you are a student, you cannot receive assistance. To me this is a bit confusing. If I had a child or if I was working at least 20 hours a week, I could receive benefits. If I was taking a job training program instead, I could get help as well. But the fact that I am trying to get a degree in Computer Information Technologies (which in itself should be listed as "job training" in my opinion since it's relative to a specific field of work), I cannot get the help I need. To me this is counter-productive, since I had always thought that the purpose of welfare or food stamps was to offer a hand up. Maybe I'm wrong, but it is just another challenge. At the present I am struggling. I have bills and expenses. I am looking for work. But most importantly, I am persevering.

That is the most important thing I can share with you. We all face challenges everyday. I feel that I have more than my fair share at this time. What we must remember though is that no matter how hard the challenge or the difficulties we face, we are only unsuccessful if we give up. A better tomorrow begins today, but it is only possible when we put forth our best effort and never give up. Until next time, I will continue to push forward and know that I will be successful as long as I always do my best. By the way, my final grade for the class I finished was an "A".



## 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 issue Anita Gilmore, our Roving Reporter asked IRC guests their opinions of the Current Interactive Resource Center under new leadership.

### Reggie Johnson

Please, we need help for a lot of things. I'm still trying myself. Trying to stay on the right path. At one time I had very wicked ways that caused me to become homeless. That is one of the reasons I try day to day to help people because it helps me stay strong.

My life is patterned around people. I know a lot of people that is poor and homeless. I was homeless myself so I try to help feed the homeless on the weekends--we feed between 400 to 500 people every weekend. I love "the people". I see a lot of things. The HealthServe Center has closed for people that can't afford to get medicine and to see a doctor. People can't go to the hospital no more because they need insurance. A world is coming to an end. Our economy is very poor.

The Interactive Resource Center (IRC) helped me get my checks started. I have seen the IRC help a lot of people but they can't do it by themselves. They can help you if you give them a chance. They help with finding places to stay, jobs and even feed the guests who come there. *The Greensboro Voice* is a paper that helps the homeless and others be heard. If you are in real need, come to the IRC and check out their resources. Thanks for reading my story.

### Kathleen Jackson

The devil is a lie. He tried to steal my peace. He sent someone to me in sheep's clothing but God revealed to me the wolf. God blessed me to be able to see it and gave me the strength to defeat the devil. Because I asked, my Lord God helped me. No matter what I go through, Jesus has saved me. He wants to save you. All you have to do is ask him with a true heart. I am a good person because I have the Lord first and I chose to be more like Him than

man. So I have no room to entertain the devil and his ways. So I say again the devil is a lie. Thank you Jesus for loving me even when I fall short. I get my strength from the Lord who loves me.

### "Mike"

This is about excelling beyond the limits of, "I can't"! This is about Mr. B. Reids-Bey. He spent thirteen years in prison falsely convicted for a 2000 robbery. Mr. Reids-Bey makes it clear to everyone, "Never let your past or bad people dictate your future". He insists that individuals stand upright, independent and fearless and do what is right by all means necessary. Prior to his 2000 incarceration, Mr. Reids-Bey led various companies such as "The Whole Nine Yards Home Remodeling and Restoration", "Keep it Clean Pressure Washing and Janitorial" and "Superior Pressure Washing".

Mr. Reids-Bey reports that in May 2012, he was ejected into a homeless environment by the prison system. He says the Social Security system refused to give ex-prisoners "entitled money" for housing, business assistance or transportation. He claims it is a "keep-them-down tactic" that leads to the lack of sufficient funds to succeed and is the direct cause that forces many ex-prisoners into homeless shelters such as the one at the Greensboro Urban Ministry.

I have a love for people. Moorish American Law tells us to love instead of hate and to live under the divine star of love, truth, peace, freedom and justice. Despite my adversities, God has blessed me in my past and now. You can't let emotions get in the way of who you are or what you really stand for. My association with Mr. Reids-Bey's "Cancer Support Store Clothing Line" and writing poems, and songs are my way of keeping people inspired, uplifted and alive.



## THE GREENSBORO VOICE THANKS OUR "LISTENERS"

Pastor Cheri Curtis	Teresa & Bill Hicks
Taylor Shain	Eileen Prufer
Elliot Higgins	Carolyn Graves
The Pilgrimage Board	Laura Mims
Michael Bohn	Alan Benson
Anna and Bill Heroy	Bob Langenfeld
Stephanie Thomas	Mr. & Mrs. ED Mann
Patricia Deboh	Anne & Sam Hummel
Taylor Shain	Dr. Denise Baker
Carol Owen	Charles Austin
Jim Ingram	Kathy Sohn
Nancy Myers	Carolyn Owen
Parker Washburn	Carol Mack
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Will & Victoria Duffy	John and Anne Haydock
Paula & Joe Yost	Lynn Bustle
Laurie White	Allison Swafford
James & Karen Evans	Joyce Powers
Mary Alexander	Steve Schlosser

## 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](mailto:greensborovoice@gmail.com).

WE ARE GRATEFUL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

# Community Resources

## Meals

### SUNDAYS

- 8:00 a.m.

Center City Park

by Awaken City Church

200 N. Elm Street
- 8:30 a.m.

Shuttle from Center City Park to Northside Baptist Church,

1100 East Cornwallis Drive
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 12:30pm

Center City Park

by The Green Team

200 N. Elm Street
- 4:00 p.m. (3rd Sundays of month only)

by Faith Works Ministries

Parking Garage across from Center City Park,

corner of Friendly and Davie
- 5:00 p.m.

Neighbors Under the Bridge

Bridge at 300 Spring Garden St.

### MONDAYS

- 7:45 a.m.

Center City Park

by the Chicken Lady and Friends

corner of W. Friendly and Davie

(If raining, it is served in the parking garage.)
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 4:30 p.m.

Food Not Bombs at the IRC

407 E. Washington Street
- 7:00 p.m.

Re4Him Monday Night Meal in front of the courthouse corner of Green and Washington

### TUESDAYS

- 8:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Grace United Methodist Church

438 West Friendly Avenue

(At intersection with N. Edgeworth, diagonally across from Hardee’s.)
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street

- 6:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Corner of N. Elm and N. Greene

(Enter from Greene Street and go to the Mullen Life Center building)

### WEDNESDAYS

- 7:00 a.m. – 8:00 a.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 11:30 a.m. (1st Wednesday of month only)

Guilford Baptist Church

5904 West Market Street
- 11:00 a.m. (2nd Wednesday of month only)

St. Stephen United Church of Christ

1000 Gorrell Street
- 4:00 p.m.

New Birth Sounds of Thunder Christian Center

2300 S. Elm/Eugene Street
- 6:00 p.m.

Grace Community Church (hotdogs and chips)

643. W. Lee St.

### THURSDAYS

- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 6:00 p.m.

First Presbyterian Church

Corner of N. Elm and N. Greene

(Enter from Greene Street and go to the Mullen Life Center building)

### FRIDAYS

- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 5:00 p.m.

New Birth Sounds of Thunder Christian Center

2300 S. Elm/Eugene Street
- 6:00 p.m.

Neighbors Under the Bridge

Bridge at 300 Spring Garden St.
- 6:00 p.m. (First Fridays only)

Greensboro Christian Church

3232 Yanceyville St.

(Transporation from Central Library available at 5:45 p.m.)

### SATURDAYS

- 8:00 a.m.

Center City Park by Burrito Bikers

200 N. Elm Street
- 8:30 a.m.

Nu Life Church

209 W. Florida Street
- 8:30 a.m. (Last Saturday only)

Muirs Chapel United Methodist Church

314 Muirs Chapel Road
- 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

Potter’s House Greensboro Urban Ministry

305 W. Lee Street
- 6:00 p.m.

16 Cents Ministry

Bridge at 300 Spring Garden St.

## Food Pantries

- 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (Tuesdays & Thursdays)

St. Paul Baptist Church

1309 Larkin Street

336-275-4680

(Utility assistance Tuesdays from 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.)
- 11:30 a.m. – 2 p.m (Monday - Friday)

Shiloh Baptist Church

1210 South Eugene Street

336-272-1166

Utility assistance may be available
- 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. (Wednesdays)

St. Phillip AME Zion Church

1330 Ashe Street

336-272-1301

(Clothing bank also available)
- 2:00 – 6:00 p.m. (Monday - Thursday)

Word of Life Food Pantry

Call 336-517-7755
- The Servant Center Grocery Assistance Program

1312 Lexington Avenue

336-275-8585
- 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. (Tuesdays and Thursdays)

St. Paul Missionary Baptist

1309 Larkin Street

(Utility assistance on Tuesdays)
- Temporary Shelters

Weaver House at the Greensboro Urban Ministry

(Guests receive three meals a day)

305 W. Lee Street

336-553-2665

## 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



## Greensboro Urban Ministry

### Pathways Housing

*(for families with children only)*

3517 N. Church Street

336-271-5988

## Room at the Inn of the Triad

*(Temporary housing for homeless, pregnant women)*

336-275-0206

## Mary's House

*(for single mothers recovering from substance abuse issues)*

520 Guilford Avenue

336-275-0820

## 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

## Jerico House

*(Ex-offenders only shelter, meals, clothing and counseling)*

2824 Liberty Road

Phone 275-9625 or 275-9628

## Malachi House II

3603 Burlington Road

336-375-0900

## Other Resources

### Joblink Career Center

303 N. Raleigh Street

336-373-5922

### 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

### 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

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

**If so, please e-mail our team at  
greensborovoice@gmail.com**

## Resource Centers

### Family Service of the Piedmont

315 E. Washington Street

336-387-6161

### 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

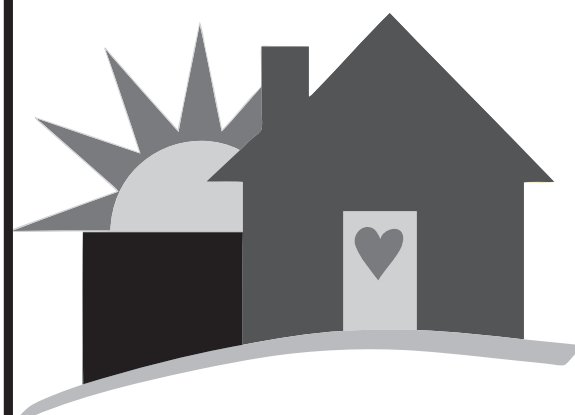
628 Summit Avenue

336-275-6090

### Sherri Denese Jackson Foundation for Domestic Violence Prevention

2200 East Market Street Suite B

336-510-9292



# 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.



@gsodaycenter



www.facebook.com/gsodaycenter

**gsodaycenter.org**

**(336)332-0824**



## Pushed to the Corner: Women Who Fly Signs

by Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater



Have you ever wondered about the people who beg on street corners and “fly signs” that say things like: “Hungry—Anything Helps” or “Lost Job” or “Help Feed My Children?” You might ask yourself if these people are homeless, and do they have mental health issues or substance abuse problems? Stephanie Thomas, staff writer and photographer for *The Greensboro Voice*, wondered in particular about women who fly signs and has written an upcoming book about interviewing them. She spent a year and a half recording the stories of eighteen women in Greensboro who fly signs on Battleground and Wendover Avenues, becoming immersed in the lives of two of the women she would eventually call friends. *Pushed to the Corner*, shares these women’s lives and circumstances, and reveals that most of the stereotypes people hold about women who beg are false. In a recent interview with Stephanie, I was curious to discover what she had learned from her time on the street with the women.

Stephanie found that the women she interviewed were “eager to talk with her about their lives and reasons they were on the street.” Many of the women had previously been housed and had relatively stable lives but bad circumstances had pushed them to the corners to do the only thing they could think to do: beg for money. The kind of help these women needed, said Stephanie, went way beyond the few dollars they earned flying their signs. Most of the women had little education, some were developmentally delayed, physically disabled, abused, and still others needed to be in rehab for their various addictions. But there is no one local resource that can help most of these women since they need far more help than is available. And many “don’t qualify for services since they don’t have an address, or if they are considered housed because they sleep in a hotel room

or with friends.” They need jobs but have no training and no references. Another problem in trying to assist these women, said Stephanie, is that “they won’t come in off the streets” to get help. They have gotten used to their lives and are afraid of change, and change would require going through so much red tape that they find it easier doing what they know: flying signs.

Stephanie did manage to convince one of the women she came to know well, that she was “smart enough and strong enough” to begin the process of re-entry into mainstream society. Jessie, whose success story is part of Stephanie’s book, finally escaped an abusive situation, stopped begging, went to school, and now has a home and a stable family life. The other women remain on the street, which is discouraging to Stephanie because they are so “fragile” and “vulnerable.” They don’t seem capable, Stephanie says, of thinking long term. They are very much surviving “day to day.”

When I asked her what effect writing this book had on her, Stephanie admitted that after a while “she gave up” and took a break because the situation was so depressing. When she returned to finish her research, she began to understand that there was more in these individuals’ lives than simply begging. Besides the pain and suffering she found in the women on the street corners, she also witnessed their courage, faith and care for each other.

Stephanie remains “passionate” about these women on the streets and you will feel empathy as well for them when you read Stephanie’s book. While it is not yet available in print, you can check out [www.pushedtothecorner.com](http://www.pushedtothecorner.com) for more information about *Pushed to the Corner*.

The one thing that we can all do to help is to give money to non-profits such as the IRC and Urban Ministry rather than directly to the women who fly.