

END-OF-THE-YEAR RECAP: LIFE AT THE S.A. CATHOLIC WORKER HOUSE

This would be a good year to use the well known aphorism, "No news is good news". Things have been relatively quiet (except for some building issues – see below), and our opportunities to provide hospitality to a growing number of guests continues. Our goal was, and still is, to post a brief update every two months and a longer "newsy" newsletter in December. Obviously, this has not happened; our last newsletter was posted in May 2014. We apologize.

ON-GOING TOPICS

Neighborhood and City Relations:

Our last long "newsy" 2013 EOY newsletter described the events leading up to and including a large meeting on December 14th called by our Councilperson and now Interim Mayor, Ivy Taylor. It was revealed that the 1st Amendment protects the Catholic Worker House's mission by authority of the city attorney. Our ministry is indeed an expression of our faith; our mission statement is Matthew 25:40 which shapes our spirituality. We have been able to provide uninterrupted services to our guests during the entire year (including holidays). This marks a bit of a reprieve from all the excitement during the past 4 years. However, we realize that we are not "out of the woods" yet.

Guests and Hospitality Services:

Unlike the recent couple of years, when we usually did not serve 100+ guests until the end of the month, now we CONSISTENTLY serve more than a 100 guests the entire month for both breakfast AND lunch. About 60% eat both meals but about 40% are different for each meal. If one counts "plates" (that is seconds for about 20-40 lunch guests and seconds for most breakfast guests), and suppers for 80+ guests by MLF, that computes to about 400 meals per day or almost 2000 per week!!!! Our largest daily numbers (150-175) occur on holidays when we are the only "show in town" (except Thanksgiving, the only holiday we are closed due to the huge celebration at the convention center).

Due to our new "sign-in" procedure (since April 2013), we now have exact counts and the names of all the guests who dine with us each day. To our surprise, our guests seem to like the process...because of this procedure, we have come to learn almost ALL of their names. We have also witnessed a genuine sense of belonging as they sign in and receive their membership cards. By the time you receive this newsletter, CWH will have broken the 2000 mark in memberships since September 2011.

Due to generous cash donations on a monthly basis from a few supporters and huge seasonal donations (Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Holy Spirit and several schools) of hygiene supplies, socks and underwear, CWH is now able to supply guests with a wide variety of items YEAR-AROUND....thank you all!!!!

PLEASE REMEMBER OUR GUESTS HYGIENE NEEDS DURING THIS HOLIDAY SEASON!!!!

Volunteers:

Since CWH's partnership with Brethren Volunteer Services, full-time resident volunteers tended to rotate on an annual basis. Since we are now inviting some our guests in to share the work of the mission; they have opted to stay longer. Marlin, James, Dennis, and Aaron have been with us between 2 to 3 ½ years. You have seen their photos, heard a little about them and sampled some of their prose and poems in the May 2014 newsletter. Anthony Franks came to us on Dorothy's birthday 2013; as he is finishing up his first year, he now would like to share a few insights with you. See the reflection below written by Anthony at his 1-Year anniversary. Abby was our "Most Cheerful" volunteer for about 8 months, but as a pensioned USAA employee for 20 years, she moved on to "real retirement" in October. She is enjoying her new home but misses the varied talents of her housemates when something or another needed fixing. When Abby left, the volunteers invited Rondis Phillips into the work and living community. As a health-care case manager in a previous job, he brings with him knowledge of services about which none of us had previously been aware. During his first month at CWH, he found an entire array of services for one guest including free housing, health and case management. Kudos to Ron!!! Adolpho, our "Senior Wisdom" member continues to live with us for a second year and we love his presence and insights.

“It seems like yesterday that I stepped off the bus in downtown San Antonio. Carrying a bag, a guitar and a backpack, my destination was 626 Nolan Street. Little did I know what lay ahead of me. This has been such an experience working at CWH. Who would think that washing dishes could be so rewarding??? AND we wash a LOT of dishes!!! But, it isn't that. It is the conversations at the sink, the spirit in the kitchen, and the smiles that come with a hot meal. At the end of my first year, I say thank you to everyone I have met. All of you mean so much to me, and I believe that I have received much more than I have given. It is an honor to be a part of CWH San Antonio.” Anthony Frank

We also continue to have a very dedicated group of “Day Volunteers”....some even coming two days per week!!! What a treat! Other than John Van Coppenolle and Jack Elder (most recently our Master Gardner) who have both been volunteering since the beginning of SA-CWH, Alicia Guinee and Pam Scrubbs have been our longest term volunteers (since 2008ish for them both). Debbie Mayer has been with us 3+ years. She is our COSTCO bargain shopper and hostess for boat outings to show her appreciation for the resident volunteers. She has also taken Chris' place as Administrator when Chris has been out of town. Abraham (Board Member) is now a fulltime teacher and so we miss him but thank him for showing up twice per week last year and almost EVERY day during summer to help teach the DOOR Social Justice classes to our high school and college mission groups. Kenneth Mamot, a retiree from Our Lady of Perpetual Help and aspiring Deacon, has now been coming a couple of times per week. Both Ken and Debbie have been invited to join the Board. Already on the Board and a 2x per week volunteer (and quiet, but effective fund raiser) is sweet Sister Jo Murray, our newest connection with our long-term partners with the Holy Spirit Sisters (see the story on Sister Kathleen Mary below). Other regulars, Joan, Mark, Brother Frances, Brother Roger, and most recently, Daniel (literally bursting with enthusiasm) have been coming when they are able and have been very helpful. For the third year, the Trinity University Hope Hall students continue to come twice per week; they are a big help and infuse Day House with youthful energy and enthusiasm. Steve Johnson, one of the 30-year+ volunteers still prepares suppers for the resident volunteers and brings about 100 sandwiches weekly for the guests!!!!

Hospitality Partners:

St. Mark's Mobile Loaves and Fishes continues to bring meals to CWH every day. If you count the “desserts (pastries and pies)” they bring for lunch but which we save for breakfast the next day, they really provide a good bit of EVERY meal and, of course ... ALL of the suppers. They also started a “Street Angel” program where members of their church will adopt our guests and pray for them and their special intention during Advent.....THANK YOU St. Marks!!! And congratulations on your brand new spacious kitchen....where the Spirit is, growth flourishes and fruit abounds!

Community Table continues to provide gourmet dishes from catering companies as well as much needed staples from other sources. And even more, they provide the entire lunch on 2-3 Fridays every month. Thanks so very much Todd and Abby, and most recently, Operations Manager, Christina!!! Also thanks to Chef Joan (Chow Train) who partners with them...and introduced us to them. Thanks to Joan too for her scrumptious leftovers on Tuesday evenings (BTW did you catch her on the Rachel Ray show a couple of weeks ago? We have a celebrity in our midst!).

Our Lady of Perpetual Help (Selma), has been a wonderful new partner (featured in our Spring 2014 newsletter), providing our guests with Saturday meals with great chivalry (fish fry, hamburger grill and a competitive chili cook off) as well as other gifts (lots of socks, underwear and hygiene products). At the request of Mike Polanco (their leader), OLPH Knights of Columbus presented CWH with a most generous check to repair our ice machine. THANKS!

And we continue to receive wonderful leftovers DAILY from Augies Barbed Wire BBQ, Greens Vegetarian Restaurant, Shipley's Donuts, Whole Foods, and San Antonio Academy. We could not serve 2000 meals/wk without them!

Building Issues:

Now that the program zoning and compliance issues have seemed to quiet down, leadership has been able to return to the drawing board regarding the two Nolan Street buildings. Nothing is simple in a Historic area. Months of time,

efforts and meetings are yet to produce any visible evidence of change. No ground can be dug up or brick laid or wood plank razed without all the I's being dotted and T's being crossed. That is what we are attempting to do. Many thanks to Gary Christensen and Karl and Christina Graf for their ongoing efforts and patience in walking through this tedious process.

626 Day House: A new accessory building was finally approved with the help of pro bono architects (Hillary and Sarah at Operative Ventures). A building contractor has been hired and we are now waiting on permits. The building is at its maximum allowable size (40% of the main building) and will be situated where the clotheslines currently are. It will contain two half bathrooms, a shower room, laundry room, and refrigerator/freezer, dry goods and garden/tool storage rooms. It will be the first time that showers will be available on this side of town; as it is, we are the only free laundry!

622 Catholic Worker House (original building): In May, we received notice that the building was leaning to the west and not in compliance with building codes. Leadership has attended several meetings with the coding compliance office and the Office of Historic Preservation. Several structural engineers (over the past decade) have weighed in that the building is "un-fixable" at any cost. Yet, we have not been successful in obtaining permission to demolish it and certainly do not have the funds to restore it. **HELP!**

DONATIONS NEEDED

SO.....WHAT CAN I DO FOR CWH THIS CHRISTMAS SEASON?????

We are so glad you asked! 😊

1. Make an end-of-the-year monetary donation to help us with our building projects.
2. Prepare a Christmas Eve and/or a Christmas Day pot luck dish for our guests and any supporters who want to attend. You may drop it off anytime that day (or the day before) OR bring it with you and join us...especially for Mass at 8:30 AM and brunch on Christmas day.
3. Provide gifts of socks, men's underwear (some women's too), hygiene products (toothbrushes, toothpaste, razors, deodorant, shampoo, lotion, body wash, bar soap, etc).
4. Mark your calendars NOW so that you will remember to attend the 30th Anniversary of the San Antonio Catholic Worker House on Dorothy Day's Birthday, Friday November 6th or Sunday November 8th (her actual birthday), 2015. Let us know if you have any preferences for one date or the other. More to follow.
5. We ALWAYS need: coffee, cream, sugar and used coffee mugs
paper goods – toilet paper, paper towel, disposable 12 oz plastic
juice cups, plastic forks and spoons
large cans of vegetables, meat sauce, chili, Rotel

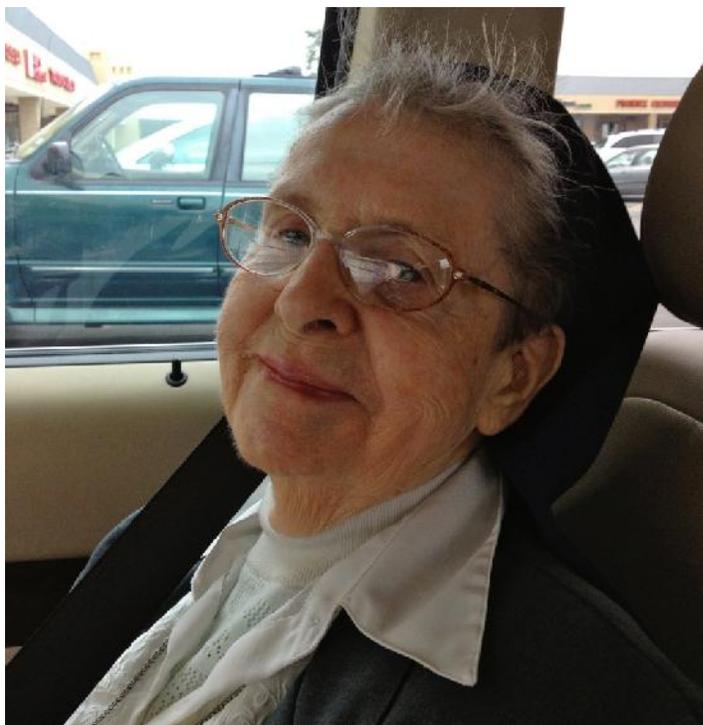
And since we are talking about donations,
we would like to especially thank some of our consistent and regular monthly donors.

Thanks to local churches, especially Holy Spirit, St Brigid and St. Elizabeth Ann Seton Catholic churches and also thanks to our regular monthly donations from individuals (Mark & Bebe Wittig and Joan Nixon [from Louisiana]) for hygiene supplies. Regular individual donors also include John VanCoppennolle (every week!!!), Walter & Mary Hanss, Karl Graf, John Gokelman, Yulanee McKnight, Georgia Davis, Donna Kozowyk, Carol Bertsch, Warner Washington, Mary Garza-

Gonzales, and John Hohman. Of course there have been many more donations in times of need or for special occasions (see names elsewhere in this document or in prior newsletters) . These have often been extremely generous.

SNAPSHOTS OF CWH EVENTS DURING LAST HALF OF 2014

Sister Kathleen Mary Walsh SHSP crossed the threshold of life on May 31st



It would take volumes to tell the many stories and the immense impact that Sister Kathleen Mary had on CWH. She was there from the beginning and also until the end. In fact, when the nuns were clearing out her bedside table after her funeral, they found an envelope with a cash donation (as was so often) to CWH, dated just a few days before her death. She was responsible for the acquisition of Faith House due to her impassioned meeting with the bank president in regards to its previous owner's foreclosure. She also was the MOST accomplished dumpster-diver in the early days. It seems that when it was her turn, she would do so in full-habit (of course). This stimulated store and restaurant owners to run out and give her large amounts of food to prevent her from getting supplies from their dumpster. (After all, who could possibly enter the Pearly Gates admitting that a nun had to resort to their garbage bin for food!) During her later years, she was a faithful Wednesday volunteer thanks to MaryEllen's kind chauffeuring efforts. She blessed Day House frequently with Holy Water, regularly brought the volunteers chocolates, and thoroughly enjoyed chatting with our guests. She is deeply missed but we are happy to know that she and Dorothy are intervening for us in all of our ongoing challenges. We are expecting twice the number of miracles since they are now in cahoots.

4th Annual CWH Hill Country Weekend Retreat

With the help of many generous donors, in particular, Paul Vance, MaryEllen Powers, and Debbie Mayer, CWH was able to host its 4th annual retreat the last weekend of September. Paul sponsored the chartered bus and CAMP fees for each of the 77 attendees. MaryEllen and Debbie helped with the purchasing, preparing and serving of all meals and drinks. Thus, the event did not cost CWH a penny!!! Many thanks to Camp CAMP and Daisy Charters for their discounts that made it all possible. It was great to get away from city concrete and to hike, swim, fish, enjoy the fresh air, and eat a grilled t-bone

steak!. Even though an evening shower dampened our campfire, we still all had the opportunity to participate in the Blessing of the Hands. Thanks to Abraham (CWH volunteer, instructor, and Board Member) for preparing and playing the music and Melody (Trinity Hope Hall Coordinator) for her beautiful singing during the morning "Giving Service" in the CAMP chapel.



Mexican American Catholic College and Assumption Seminary Homelessness in San Antonio Symposium

The Sociology Students of
Mexican American Catholic College
cordially invites you to:

Homelessness in San Antonio Symposium

Friday, October 24th, 2014
From 5 to 7pm
At the MACC Fiesta Room

*Keynote Speaker: Catholic Worker House
Representative*



In benefit of the Catholic Worker House
Donations welcome

In the Fall, a group of 5 seminarian students, Matthew DeLeon, Noel Simental, Adrian Salazar, Javier Rodriguez, Juan Robles, along with Sr. Margarita Hernandez Alfaro from El Salvador, enrolled in a Sociology course at the Mexican American Catholic College (MACC) in San Antonio and volunteered at the Catholic Worker House (CWH). Their experiences motivated them to organize a symposium (jointly sponsored by Assumption Seminary) on the cultural aspects of homelessness in San Antonio.

Among the symposium participants were Dr. Arturo Chavez, President, and CEO MACC, Very Reverend, Fr. Jeff Pehl, Rector of Assumption Seminary and professors from the Sociology course and seminary. CWH founder, Dee Sanchez, and resident volunteer, Anthony Franks, were featured speakers from the CWH Community.

Dee spoke of the CWH San Antonio's history and its progress from 1985 to the present. Her personal testimony of aiding the poor and homeless in the early 1980s also included her heart touching relationship with a young pregnant Hispanic woman whom she housed and helped deliver her beautiful baby girl, which was a basis for starting the CWH of San Antonio. Anthony, a talented woodworker from Oklahoma, has lived at the House since December 2013. He spoke of

his day-to-day activities at the House and most importantly seeing God in his relationships with the many homeless men, women and children of all ages and cultures.

The symposium was also an opportunity to pay tribute to Dorothy Day by displaying MACC's collection of the famous wood engravings by Fritz Eichenberg, "a close friend with Dorothy Day and a great supporter of The Catholic Worker". He was a highly celebrated artist dedicated to sharing his outrage about injustice and war and his hopes for

decency and peace in the world <http://www.fritzeichenbergprints.com> His prints are available for sale at 978-546-0100 or wngreenbaum@verizon.net. Two samples are below.

ACC, originally the Mexican American Cultural Center, grew into the Mexican American Catholic College. Its purpose is to develop leadership of for a culturally diverse church via degreed programs in Pastoral Ministry and hosting local national and international conferences and symposia to address the communicative (language) and religious ministerial needs of the rapidly growing Hispanic population throughout the United States and especially within the Archdiocese of San Antonio. The Archdiocese has a close relationship with MACC, which is conveniently located across the street (West Ashby) from Assumption Seminary. The expertise and flexibility of MACC's faculty and spirituality augments academic opportunities for seminarian formation and is home to the Diaconate Formation program. MACC welcomes lay, religious and seminarians into its student body. And CWH thanks them for the donations taken up at the event!!!



Upcoming Events and “Giving” Opportunities:

Christmas Eve and Morning

Christmas Eve: In the spirit of Luke 14:14, CWH will host a buffet, Christmas movies, and a sleep over for guests who have nowhere else to go on that very holy night. Thanks to Bill Miller Inc. and the Vance family for providing the supports to make this possible. If anyone would like to prepare a potluck to drop off some time on the 23rd or 24th, it would be greatly appreciated.

Christmas Morning: CWH will again host the 6th Annual Christmas Morning Mass and Brunch for our guests, volunteers, supporters, readers, neighbors and ANYONE who wants to join us. Mass will begin at 8:30 and ALL are welcome. A potluck dish of either breakfast or lunch food is certainly welcome, but NOT required.

Holiday Donor Opportunities: ALMOST 24:7

As the holidays tend to open the hearts of our supporters even wider, volunteers will be on duty all weekend from Thanksgiving until Sunday January 4th to receive monetary (☺☺☺) donations or donations of prepared food, party leftovers, hygiene products, socks, underwear, gloves, and coats. Sorry, we cannot accept raw meat or clothing at this time.

As always, we are open from 7 AM to 7 PM Monday through Thursday and 8 AM to 1 PM on Fridays. Although we will be closed, a volunteer WILL BE PRESENT on-site at Day House from 1 PM to 5 PM on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday. Just knock loud. If you need to come on Saturday or Sunday morning (or later in the evening), a sign will be posted on the front door with the name and cell number of the volunteer on duty for that weekend. Just call when you arrive and give us a

couple of minutes. Or you can call us at 224-7736 (backup 274-8884) any weekday, or between 1 and 5 PM on weekends, to schedule a drop off time.

Oh... IF it is an envelope with a check, we now have a new mail slot just left of the front door at Day House. It empties into the chapel where the angels will guard it. ;)

Dorothy Day's Birthday in 2015:

After such a huge event last year and with our 30th Anniversary coming up next year, we decided to celebrate Dorothy's birthday very simply. (We think she would approve.) We had a special meal for our guests and prayer service in her memory...thanking her for her guidance, blessings and peacefulness during this past year. We hope to celebrate with pizzazz worthy of a 30th Anniversary on either Friday, November 6th or Sunday November 8th. Let us know your preference.

2015: A Year of Studying Dorothy Day and Her Social Justice Efforts:

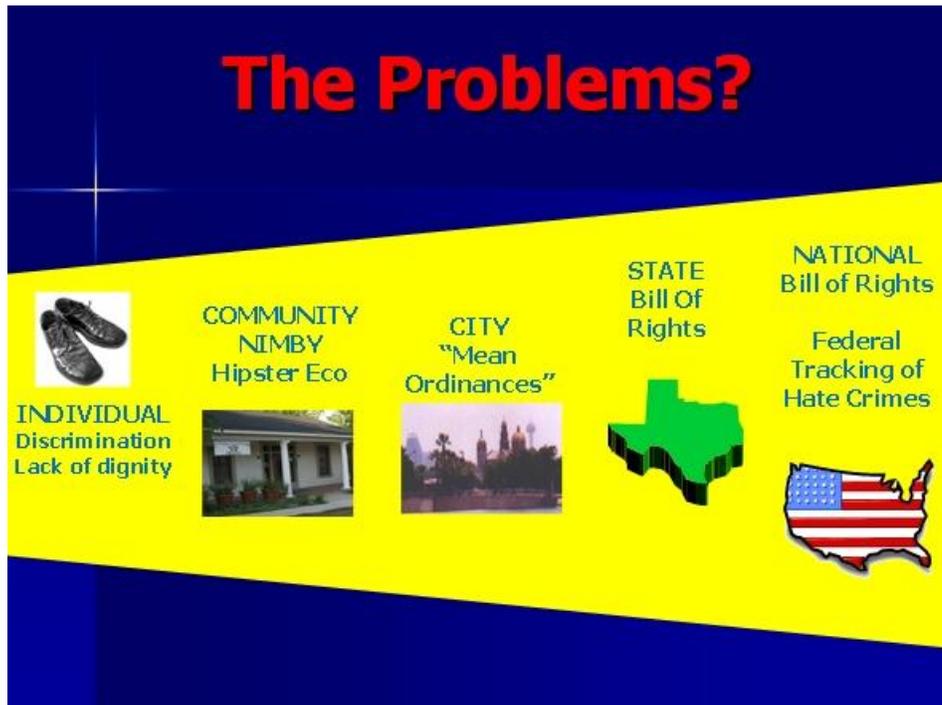
We just learned that a coalition of several groups will embark on a year-long academic study of the life and social justice efforts of Dorothy Day. It is in the planning stages, but seems very exciting. Stay tuned to hear more about this exciting opportunity and the possibility of CEUs for some disciplines.

"Social Justice Corner"

For many years, CWH has been a mission site for high-school and college students, church youth groups and some church-related adult mission groups in partnership with the Mennonite Church DOOR program (Discovering Opportunities for Outreach and Reflection). Two years ago, we were asked to provide a didactic "arm" to the ministry. (See Summer and Fall CWH 2013 newsletters.) This year we continued to do the same with updated information. Topics included causes, challenges, issues at the individual, community, city, state, and national levels, and possible strategies to alleviate suffering and increase compassion for those experiencing homelessness. This year we again hosted over 300 students; some groups were independent of the DOOR program. Not only did the students learn about these issues but they were able to participate in a national effort to survey those who were chronically homeless to determine the extent to which they experienced "economic profiling" in health care, social service non-profit organizations, for profit businesses, and the police department. Over, two hundred surveys were completed. Not only will these results be submitted to and compiled by the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH), but the very process of asking these very pointed questions opened the space for real, in-depth conversations between the students and our guests about the challenges of homelessness. The questions bridged the awkward silent gap when trying to engage guests after the initial questions... what is your name? where are you from? what brings you to San Antonio? and what brings you to the CWH?...are all answered. All involved (CWH guests and volunteers, DOOR leadership, and the students) felt honored to be able to help with this national effort to raise the nation's consciousness about the unique challenges faced by those who are homeless.

This year, instead of sharing the statistics and outcomes of these classes, we wanted to share a bit about the content. Several of the out of state groups asked for the PowerPoint presentation to share with their churches and universities back home. It made us realize that we have never had a venue to share the information with our own local community. So here is a taste of the 70+ slide presentation.

We approached the challenge of homelessness by moving from the micro-lens of an individual (walking in the shoes of one of our guests) to the increasing macro-lenses of the challenges of homelessness at the community → city → state → national levels.



Causes of Homelessness:

Before focusing our lenses on the challenges of those facing homelessness, we discussed causes. Like many of us, the most commonly held misconception was that drug and alcohol addictions were the main cause of homelessness. Actually, a national survey suggests that this may NOT be true. However, it does seem that addiction can be the primary reason that prevents people who are homeless from becoming successfully re-housed and re-integrated into the work force. There are two rapidly growing categories of homelessness...veterans and teens aging out of foster care at 18 years of age.



Individual Lenses:

Though we have hundreds of CWH stories we would like to share, below are just a couple recent ones. The first story illustrates the discrimination that people who are homeless face. The second story spotlights our recent "Teen Family Group" and the challenges that young adults aging out of foster care are facing.

"A" is 77 y/o disheveled guest was sitting at a bus stop. The man next to him was eating a pizza and drinking a beer. When the second man's bus pulled up, he handed the nearly finished beer and pizza to A. Minutes later the police drove up and charged A with public consumption even though A has not consumed alcohol in years, did not drink a sip of the beer and was not offered a breath analyzer or blood tests to possibly clear him. As opposed to "traffic", "divorce" or "felony" courts, his case will be heard in the "Quality of Life Appearance Court". This court hears all the cases that relate to the conditions of homelessness: camping, urinating in public, laying down of belongings in a public area, etc. See a related article in Sunday November 23rd Express News by Gilbert Garcia. In response to THIS alarming story, Steve Johnson (long time volunteer) raised the money to pay for A's \$170 fine. However, A, accompanied by 2 CWH volunteers, opted to tell the court that he was NOT guilty and wanted a "jury trial" to sort this out. Good for him!!! He will have a voice in his outcome! His trial is January 8th at 1 PM at the Courthouse on Frio if anyone is interested. You can bet Steve and other volunteers will be there to cheer him on. A's story also inspired Steve to pen this poem:

Living on the Edge By Steve Johnson

*They're living on the edge
Living from handout to handout
Often hungry by no fault of their own.*

*Some times alone
Neither clothes nor bed
Wet and cold to the bone*

*Not by choice
The, homeless children,
With no voice of their own*

*And when vile faces
Force them astray
As these children seek to keep
Hunger and want away,
They are shunned
Seen as unclean, unworthy of a kindness*

*When all they seek is to keep the wolves at bay,
While the rest of us,
Kneel, holy, and pray*

"Teen Family": CWH recently began providing hospitality to a "family" of about a dozen unrelated teens who met on the streets and have banded together, almost glued at the hips, for mutual support. They faced homelessness as children for various reasons and now again as their "cases" have dropped off the list for state supports for foster children. They have another thing in common, they all have one or more medical challenges or disabilities (seizures, diabetes, Tourette's syndrome, Tetralogy of Fallot congenital heart malformation, spina bifida, etc) and have no access to medical care. We now "treat" (support) a seizure episode from one of the group almost every day. We have tried to access medical care through the emergency care departments of 4 different hospitals to no avail. Thus, we stopped calling EMS when the episode is one of his/her "typical" events and due to missed medication (and we have a pulse oximeter on site to make sure they are not hypoxic). We have been pursuing SSI, but it is a challenge since none of them have official photo IDs. What they need is ongoing health care and medication; they have fallen through the cracks. **We are at a dead end.** If anyone has any ideas, we would welcome them...especially needed is a free Family Medicine doctor and funds for their medications.

Neighborhood Lens

Sometimes the gentrification of an urban neighborhood is, in itself, a cause of homelessness. Additionally the process may lead to the closing of long-standing "mom and pop business" or faith-based ministries that serve those who are poor and/or homeless (the NIMBY "Not In My Back Yard" principle). Property developers may buy up houses in a run down neighborhood, renovate them and sell them at a significant profit. The influx of wealthier residents, often of a different race and culture, with nicer houses drives up both rental rates and property taxes forcing the poorer native inhabitants to foreclose and/or move out of the neighborhood to more affordable apartments. Some have termed this "hipster economics" (<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2014/05/peril-hipster-economics-2014527105521158885.html>) Umar Lee in this article proposed a plan to mitigate the effects of gentrification which he calls "50-50-20-15". That is, businesses in gentrifying neighborhoods should hire a workforce of at least 50% minorities, 50% from the local neighborhood, 20% ex-offenders, with all being paid at least \$15 per hour. Nice!

City Lens

Cities can independently pass ordinances as they deem necessary by city planners and leaders. Most cities have some ordinances that address issues related to homelessness, such as "no camping, urinating, sleeping, pan handling etc. in public places like sidewalks, under bridges or parks. Based on the number, type, and the extent that such ordinances are enforced on the one hand and the availability of public supports (eg.: 24/7 public restrooms) on the other, cities have been ranked as the "Meanest". San Antonio was ranked 13th "meanest city" in 2006 (up from 17th in the in the prior rating). <http://www.citymayors.com/society/homeless>. The last rating on record cited only the top 10 meanest cities; San Antonio was not listed. However, there has been quite a bit of attention in the media regarding proposal in SA to ticket and fine any person who offered food or money to a panhandler. Ft. Lauderdale is also in the news over this issue and a minister went to jail. In the same report, Homes Not Handcuffs is quoted as stating that "practices that criminalize homelessness do nothing to address the underlying causes of homelessness. Instead, they drastically exacerbate the problem. They frequently move people away from services. When homeless persons are arrested and charged under these ordinances, they may develop a criminal record, making it more difficult to obtain the employment and/or housing that could help them become self-sufficient."

State Lens

In addition to San Antonio, three additional Texas cities were listed in the top 20 "Meanest Cities" (Dallas #6, Houston #7 and Austin #15). California had 3 cities on the list; the remaining 13 cities were each from a different state. Since Texas had 20% of the meanest cities, does that make us the "Meanest State"? (As noted above, more recent

determination listed only the 10 meanest cities and no Texas cities were cited.) Another way to look at the level of a “state’s meanness” is by the number of hate crimes committed to the homeless. The federal government does not track homeless victims hate crimes as it does for crimes motivated by religion, race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. Thus the National Coalition for the Homeless (NCH) is tracking them with hopes of eventual inclusion. According to the NCH, there are three times more lethal hate crimes involving those who are homeless than those of ALL the other categories COMBINED.

TABLE 2 DECLARED HATE CRIME DEATHS VS. UNDECLARED HATE CRIME DEATHS OF HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS

| Year | Homicides Classified as Hate Crimes (FBI Data) | Fatal Attacks on Homeless Individuals (NCH Data) |
|--------------|---|--|
| 1999 | 17 (9 racially, 2 religiously, 3 sexual orientation, 3 ethnically motivated) | 49 |
| 2000 | 19 (10 racially, 1 religiously, 2 sexual orientation, 6 ethnically motivated) | 43 |
| 2001 | 10 (4 racially, 1 sexual orientation, 5 ethnically motivated) | 18 |
| 2002 | 13 (4 racially, 3 religious, 4 sexual orientation, 2 ethnically motivated) | 14 |
| 2003 | 14 (5 racially, 6 sexual orientation, 2 ethnically, 1 anti-disability motivated) | 8 |
| 2004 | 5 (3 racially, 1 religiously, 1 sexual orientation motivated) | 25 |
| 2005 | 6 (3 racially, 3 ethnically motivated) | 13 |
| 2006 | 3 (3 racially motivated) | 20 |
| 2007 | 9 (5 sexual orientation, 2 racially, 2 ethnicity motivated) | 28 |
| 2008 | 7 (5 sexual orientation, 1 racially, 1 ethnically motivated) | 22 |
| 2009 | 8 (6 racially, 1 sexual orientation, 1 ethnically motivated) | 43 |
| 2010 | 7 (1 racially, 3 religiously, 1 ethnically, 2 sexual orientation motivated) | 24 |
| 2011 | 4 (1 racially, 3 sexual orientation) | 32 |
| 2012 | 10 (1 racially, 8 religiously, 1 sexual orientation) | 18 |
| 2013 | Data Not Yet Available | 18 |
| TOTAL | 132 | 375 |

Chart compiled with data from the Center for the Study of Hate & Extremism (California State University, San Bernardino): Analysis of Data from the F.B.I. and the National Coalition for the Homeless.

When the same data are examined on a state-by-state basis, Texas follows only California and Florida in the number of hate crimes committed against those who are homeless. (See below)

Why do people treat those who are homeless with such cruelty for no other reason than because they are simply “homeless”? Many even post their aggressive actions on the internet with no fear of retribution. (One video appeared on YouTube showing 4 young men attacking a man, tying him up, and wrapping him with strings of firecrackers, which they lit and then laughed and clapped while he moaned in pain!!!) Why? Because hate crimes against those who are homeless are often not investigated, much less prosecuted. See *Vulnerable to Hate: A Survey of Hate Crimes and Violence Committed Against the Homeless* published by NCH in June, 2014. Additionally, a study conducted by Princeton University using sophisticated neuroimaging techniques revealed that when research subjects are shown photos of a “homeless person” their brains react as if they are seeing objects...not people! (Fiske, Princeton University in NY Times 11/27/13) This is very sad indeed.

IMAGE 1 LOCATIONS OF HATE CRIMES COMMITTED AGAINST HOMELESS INDIVIDUALS FROM 1999-2013



Vulnerable to Hate: Hate Crimes against the Homeless 8

National

Discrimination of those who are homeless is pervasive in the United States. No state is immune. Cities that attract the largest amounts of tourists tend to focus on ordinances directed at those who are homeless more so than those that do not. Larger cities with vast arrays of services and cities with more temperate climates in the South also tend to attract citizens, as well as immigrants, who may also be struggling with homelessness. And exacerbating the risk of homelessness, if passed, some of our national political leaders support legislation that would curtail social supports that assist those who are poor and/or homeless.

WHAT CAN WE DO????

As consciousness is raised, more and more people are beginning to ask this question. There are no easy answers. Of course, the only cure for homelessness are homes. This has been approached in many ways from insisting upon total rehabilitation before one “earns” a roof over his/her head and now evolving into a newer philosophy of “Housing First”. That is, providing a permanent place to live first. However, it is equally important to simultaneously provide such persons with social supports and case management that offer a sense of community and compassion so that the person can successfully integrate into the work place and society. The effort to end homelessness by 2020 (or 20??) has become a motto of numerous organizations and local and state governments for several years. This goal is daunting and the road can be very frustrating, but we need to do something....as individuals, as members of our communities and churches, and as citizens of our municipalities, states and nation. As Mother Teresa stated:



SOLUTIONS?

**Do not wait for
leaders...
do it alone...
person to person.**

Mother Teresa

As individuals, we can pray and intercede as best we can. Dorothy Day certainly did a lot of this. We can also reach out personally to one or more persons experiencing homeless, listen to them, and be a friend. Not only offer them money for a cup of coffee, but offer to sit down and share coffee with them and learn their names and their stories. Mother Teresa also said that often the most painful poverty is the lack of love rather than the lack of material things.

Within our communities, we can raise the consciousness of our families, friends and neighbors regarding the need for human dignity of the person who is homeless. Instead of shunning the homeless population in our neighborhoods or any one who might happen to walk into our churches, reach out to them to make them feel welcome. Volunteer at a center that provides services to those who are poor. Live in solidarity with the poor...any attempt is better than nothing. Purchase only what we absolutely need...not everything we want. Ignore Black Friday; instead, go to the city park, bring a picnic and share with someone who seems to have nowhere else to go.

Within our cities, we should be familiar with the ordinances passed. Do they discriminate against the poor? Are they fair to all? Do they threaten the dignity of those who are homeless? If not protest and become more informed for the next elections. If you act as individual, it has been said that 1 personal face-to-face meeting is equal to 10 phone calls, is equal to 100 postal letters is equal to 1000 emails. Go for it! We could also do our part in joining in a world-wide pilgrimage to make cities more compassionate. Google Karen Armstrong's TED talk and the world-wide Compassionate City Campaign. San Antonio, led by the PeaceCenter, has joined hundreds of other cities in trying to accomplish this goal and has had some fantastic results over the past two years. They would love your help.

At the state and federal government levels, we can learn more about and become active in the efforts to develop state Bill of Rights for those who are homeless. Puerto Rico was the first and Rhode Island, Illinois and Connecticut followed in 2012-2013. California, Oregon, Vermont, and Missouri are trying. It doesn't seem the idea is on Texas' radar screen yet, but who knows? Finally, NCH has been working at the federal level the past several years for a National Homeless Bill of Rights. Become a member of the Texas Coalition for the Homeless and get involved. Google NCH to learn about its far reaching efforts and join in to make a difference! YOU could be the spark that bursts into a contagious flame!!

Maybe the best strategy for our nation, would be to vote Pope Francis as President!!!!

THE END