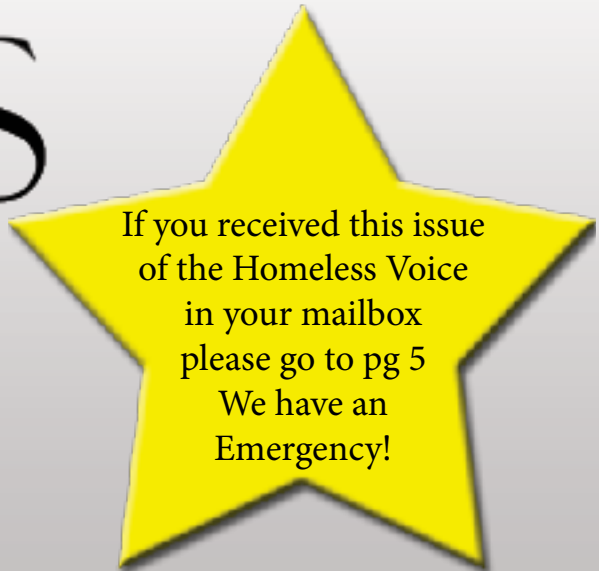


THE HOMELESS VOICE

Part of the North American Street Newspaper Association

COSAC Foundation | PO Box 292-577 Davie, FL 33329 | 954-924-3571



TAMPAS HOMELESS TRIBUTE



Robbyn Mitchell

Cold winds forced the crowd of more than 70 mourners to stand close together on the steps of Joe Chillura Courthouse Square Park Dec 21st. Every year on the longest night, the Hillsborough County Homeless Coalition gathers the community there to memorialize those who died alone with no address and unsure of where their next meals would come from.

Deborah Lyttle, 31, and Johnny B. Hall, 27, braved the cold to hear a volunteer call the names and light candles in honor of the homeless friends they lost in 2012.

One in particular, 17-year-old Jerridedan Lakisha Bolds Froyer, gave them pause. Froyer was the youngest of the 67 names called Friday night. She died in September, days before her 18th birthday, after being pushed off a bridge into the Arcadia River, according to the DeSoto County Sheriff's Office.

The Homeless Persons' Memorial Day service was the second event Hall had attended for Froyer. The first was on her birthday, Sept. 21 — a candlelight vigil outside the Salvation Army and a trip to Ybor City, one of Froyer's favorite places. She slept anywhere she could, Lyttle said. The teen had family and a bed, but problems at home made her return to the streets. She slept in parks, alleyways and abandoned homes.

"We tried to look out for her because she was so young," Hall said. "We protected her and kept the grown folks away."

But there are no real protections for the more than 17,000 peo-
(Continued on pg 6)

Dear Homeless Voice Readers:
We are the small non-profit that runs the #1 emergency and response shelter in South Florida. We serve, house, and care for 500 homeless every day, and have costs like any other business: water, power, rent, programs, staff and legal help.
The Homeless Voice is extremely effective. It is a place where anyone in need will get help. It is a safe place for people to go when they have nowhere else to turn. We take no government funds. We run on donations averaging about 33 cents.
If everyone reading this paper gave the price of a cup of coffee, our fundraising would be done. If helping people is important to you as it is important for us, take one minute to go online to www.hvoice.org and become a monthly angel. \$15 per month is what we need from You. Please help us forget fundraising and get back to Serving the Homeless. Thank you.

Mass Shootings and Something to Think About

Sean Cononie

On Saturday, December 15th, not even 21 hours after the massive school shooting I got to my desk and went to Facebook and Twitter. I do not usually put a post each day about the days ups and downs but that day I posted "I can't believe I have to say this, Thank God it is Saturday, SCHOOLS OUT let us still pray for them all." School out, will this mean there will be no kids getting killed by some lone gunman? I pray and hope so.

There is just no excuse for something to happen like this.

As I heard the news I could only imagine what if it was my grandkids or my brother's kids. I began to feel so sad, that it went so deep I only could stop and pray for the parents, the families, the siblings and the school. How could I not? Then I thought of the kids and them not knowing what was going on and how their last seconds felt. I prayed for them as well. The teachers who got their kids to safety I prayed for them. Watching the parents and them not knowing if it was their kids or not was just so chilling. I am sure I do not have to explain

to you the readers because I know you felt the same things I felt... for how could you not? I asked Jesus to put His arms around those families and let them feel His presence and let them know that their kids are with Him and they are Ok. Please Lord let them know that now.

As most of you know I am a crisis kind of guy and being that way allows me to do my job serving the people we serve. I have to respond fast because I am the guy who has to keep the peace. I remember when we had "Active Shooter Training" at the shelter last year. By the way here is the link we used for our training.

http://www.alerts.si.edu/docs/DHS_ActiveShooterBook.pdf

I belong to a Homeland Security Task force where we have meetings trying to secure the nation's infrastructure. This ac-

tive shooter policy was given to us a year or so ago.

So after the initial shock I called my mom and dad and we discussed how sad this was, especially with the upcoming Christmas season. These lovely parents should be seeing their little ones with smiles on their faces as they open up Santa's presents. I said to the people in the office some of these families will be homeless in the future for they will never recover from what this killer did to them. This



...what could have been done to prevent this and what else needs to be done to prevent these things from happening in the first place?

incident will cause so many issues for the families who lost their little one and some of families who did not lose a child will have some of the same stressors that will cause some of them to be dysfunctional.

A little bit after I digested the loss of those little kids I went into my crisis management mode. I began to think what could have been done to prevent this and what else needs to be done to prevent these things from happening in the first place. No matter how you look at this, this is a form of terrorism. There was so much terror present and with that being said what can be done to stop it.
(Continued on pg 8)

Our Purpose: To Help the Homeless Learn How to Help Themselves

For just \$15 a month you can keep a homeless family off the streets for a day

Friends of the Homeless

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Please include on memo what name should appear in paper.

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**In Loving Memory of
Rosa Esperanza
Manrique Pino**

**In Loving Memory of
Angela J. Fante
"Mimi"
June 4, 1917 June 12, 2010**

Our Homeless Voice readers:

About the COSAC Foundation

About the COSAC Foundation

The COSAC Foundation was originally established in May 1997 to partner with other social service agencies, in the area, that provided help to the homeless population. COSAC also independently feeds the homeless. We have grown into a multifaceted agency that feeds, shelters, and arranges for each homeless person to receive the necessary access to social and noncompulsory religious services to enable a return to a self-reliant lifestyle. And for the small percentage of people incapable of living independent lives, we provide a caring and supportive environment for their long-term residency.



Our Philosophy

COSAC believes that to remain effective we must strive to remain flexible, and be ready to evolve to meet the needs of the homeless with equivalent services.

Our Mission Statement

To provide the homeless population access to shelter, food, employment opportunities or referrals, as well as access to social services all toward the aim of enabling their return, if possible, to self-reliance.

To accomplish this COSAC is the hub organization. We developed the Homeless Voice newspaper, a COSAC funding tool, which has been responsible for employing homeless people and therefore giving them income to survive on the streets. Also, the "The Homeless Voice" is the means by which we advocate on behalf of the homeless population and to educate the public as to the true nature of homelessness and ways we can all work to eliminate the bias against this sector of our population and to help empower those affected by homelessness to regain or maintain their self-esteem and sense of self-worth during their transition through difficult times. The Homeless Voice became the official name of our homeless division, which operates four facilities in Broward County. We created the COSAC Quarters Hotel for the poor, a hotel with 21 rooms that serve the indigent or people with limited income. The clients receive three meals a day at Arnolds Café, named after the great homeless advocate Arnold Abbott. Another agency is the Day Labor Company, employees of which match an outside company labor request with a suitable shelter resident. Lastly, COSAC Foundation decided to become the South Florida County Food pantry. This service helps us provide food for those "nearly homeless" families.

Our Vision

To end discrimination against the homeless population and to develop such an effective network of services that we greatly reduce the time a person or family emerges out of homelessness back into self-reliance.

If you received this issue of the Homeless Voice in your mailbox please go to pg 5 We have an Emergency!

Donate Online

www.homelessvoice.org/donate

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Cathy's Prayer List

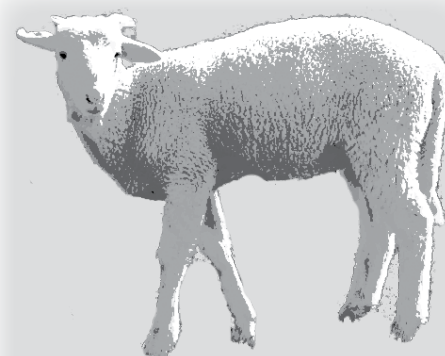
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We need all of our supporters to please send in \$10

Your Donations can be made by sending in a check to:
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Save The Date!

THE HOMELESS VOICE

3rd Annual

5K RACE TO END HOMELESSNESS

Hollywood Beach, FL
April 6, 2013

To Sponsor, Volunteer,
or sign up for 5K updates,
please visit us online
hvoice.org/5k

Prayer for Religious Liberty

O GOD OUR CREATOR,
from your provident hand we have received
our right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.
You have called us as your people and given us
the right and the duty to worship you, the only true God,
and your Son, Jesus Christ.
Through the power and working of your Holy Spirit,
you call us to live out our faith in the midst of the world,
bringing the light and the saving truth of the Gospel
to every corner of society.

We ask you to bless us
in our vigilance for the gift of religious liberty.
Give us the strength of mind and heart
to readily defend our freedoms when they are threatened;
give us courage in making our voices heard
on behalf of the rights of your Church
and the freedom of conscience of all people of faith.

Grant, we pray, O heavenly Father,
a clear and united voice to all your sons and daughters
gathered in your Church
in this decisive hour in the history of our nation,
so that, with every trial withstood
and every danger overcome —
for the sake of our children, our grandchildren,
and all who come after us —
this great land will always be “one nation, under God,
indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
Amen.

The Paradoxical Commandments

- If you do good, people will accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives. *Do good anyway.*
- If you are successful, you will win false friends and true enemies. *Succeed anyway.*
- The good you do today will be forgotten tomorrow. *Do good anyway.*
- Honesty and frankness make you vulnerable. *Be honest and frank anyway.*
- The biggest person with the biggest ideas can be shot down by the smallest person with the smallest mind. *Think big anyway.*
- What you spend years building may be destroyed overnight. *Build anyway.*
- People really need help but may attack if you help them. *Help people anyway.*
- Give the world the best you have and you might get kicked in the teeth. *Give the world the best you've got anyway.*

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We Have Been Removed From The Streets...

For any new readers to our paper, I'd like to explain a little on how we support ourselves. We run on 100 % generosity of our readers. We are not funded through the government and depend solely on the communities we serve. Distributing the free Homeless Voice newspaper has been our way over the last ten years to collect donations while providing a job and money to the transients of South Florida. By not accepting government funding we are able to accept people of every age, race, criminal and mental background with no limitations on how long they can stay or how much we can help them.

It is very important for us to bring the news to you as well so we can reduce the number of homeless people in the community. The more people who read our newspaper, the more we can educate and then help fix the problem of homelessness.

However we are in serious danger of losing that freedom. More and more cities are taking our vending rights away while sending more people to our shelters. Our supplies are running low and our bills are piling up.

If you have received this free issue in your mailbox, thank you for taking the time to read about us and the people who live here. We are a full service shelter and offer three meals a day, a bed to sleep in and the opportunity for counseling and assistance in applying for benefits and jobs. We offer much more and when the opportunity allows we often provide emergency assistance and aid in the surrounding area. We are in desperate need of people who can donate every month.

We love visitors to come by and see what we are all about. Please see below on ways to donate, thank you!



We have an
Emergency!

HOMELESS VOICE

\$25

Buys a hot meal for ten people

\$50

Buys 2 bags of groceries for a homeless family

\$100

Buys a night in an emergency hotel accomodation for a homeless family

Photo by Design Dorm

Don't Let
the Doors
Close on
These
Children

www.hvoice.org | COSAC Foundation P.O. Box 292-577 | Davie, FL 33329

Nursing Those Who Nursed Her

Richard Carlish

Years ago a very strong woman named Phyllis walked through our doors. Phyllis was a no nonsense take no prisoners kind of woman with really strong work ethics. As one of our top vendors using her personality and drive Phyllis did very well for herself. A tough woman but very likable she was the kind of person if she liked you; she would be your best friend, if she didn't like you she wouldn't have anything to do with you. That wasn't because she was a cold woman, quite the contrary she was as compassionate as they come. She just didn't have the time or the tolerance for nonsense. As it goes she saved up enough money and became a success story by moving into her own place and becoming a nurse. Now giving back to the shelter that took care of her when she needed help she comes in a few times a week and helps with the hygiene of some of our more incapacitated clients. She is a marvelous woman, always with a smile even when she seems upset. She loves to joke around and even at the age of 70 she has more energy and more zest for life than most 20 year olds. The reason I chose her as a subject for this story is due to the fact I recently found out she was 70 and it blew my mind. We were all very surprised to find out her age. We all thought maybe 50, 55. God has definitely given back to her what she has given to others. For those of us she helps call her



a Godsend. If it wasn't for her these clients who couldn't take care of themselves would never be as happy as they are. I have no doubt her compassion extends long outside of the shelter into her normal workplace. I love this woman to death. We joke around as if we are best friends and that's fine. I wouldn't have it any other way.

On Spirituality...New Year

We say goodbye to 2012 and welcome in 2013. There is something wonderful about the hope that comes with the promise of a clean slate. The things that happened to us in 2012 are now in the past. There is a whole year before us that we can have some input into how this New Year will be. That of course is the reason for New Year's resolutions. Most of us realize that we could be better, better husband, better wife, better student, brother, sister, worker, better friend. There are many positions each one of us hold and we are an integral part of a much bigger whole. If we are better, the whole of humanity is better. If we are kinder the whole world is a kinder place. I don't often mention the devil in my writing, but if the evil wanted to spread and grow I think it would use despair as its' greatest weapon. We do understand that to bring about good in the world we need to bring about good in our homes. Goodness spreads; it has a contagious type quality to it. Our souls long for it. Have a good New Year, May the face of God shine upon you and may His hand guide you in all you say and do. Peace, Deacon Bob

6 I Loved to Work and I Worked My Whole Life

Sean Cononic

I want to work, I just do not want to be a burden on anyone not even a homeless shelter- was the words my friend Mr. Ronald Collins said to me when I first met him. My words back to him were "you're hired." He said he could do anything but heavy lifting because of his stomach which came from a long history of drinking from depression. Ronnie was sick but able to do housekeeping where he swept most of the day and when he was done with that he would sweep again and again. I would say to him that he should take it easy and he would say I can do this and let me shine. He would work an hour on and take 30 minutes off and work an hour and take some more time on a break.

When I would give him his pay he was so thankful and two times he donated it back to us. I kept it secret most of the time because he wanted it that way. He felt bad he just came in and I gave him a little job and he bypassed others who were here before him.

I paid special attention to him because he was not the first person we had here that had end stage liver disease. We never could find out just how bad it was because his "follow up" was not the best. You see when you have end stage liver disease your body fills with fluid and your legs get so swollen and so does your stomach. We would have to have him go to the hospital to be drained. As they would drain him, he would come back skinny and at it again with his broom. I kept on telling him he did not need to work but he said no he needed to work for he had severe pride. He went in to hospice for pain control not because he was ready to depart this earth.

Even when he was part of hospice he would still do his daily sweeping but this time upstairs was his area of concern. The down stair parking lot became too much and he finally realized that. I would be sitting at my desk and I would hear a little knock on my office door asking if he could sweep around my desk on the floor. Anyone who knows me knows I have paper work on the floor all the time because when I go to throw it away I realize I still needed it so it piles up throughout the day. At the end of the day I begin to throw it away. So he would come in and do his sweeps. I would say "Ronnie that's good, you got it all" and he would say an off the cuff smart remark as my friend Johnny would always do and it was always so off the cuff I would always get a fuzzy feeling of Johnny's past remarks.

I finally took him out of hospice once again to get his stomach drained and this time I really thought he would make it. I was wrong. Even when he did not have anything to drink as far as alcohol was concerned he still did not fit the criteria to get a liver transplant. He was clean for almost seven months but his health was so severe he just could not get on the list.

Ronnie and I became very close. I felt so bad for him and when we had our chats each and every time

he came in to the office for his hospice meds. There was not a time that when we said we loved him that he did not say I love you back. That was the way we ended each time we spent together.

Things got bad for him and we once again sent him to the hospital and this time it just became so bad he was starting to go. I had made the decision he should stay in the hospice unit until the pain was controlled and once stabilized we would move him back home to the shelter where we would provide 24 hour care for him. When things get bad for our people who are in hospice we create little jobs for some of the clients. We pay them to take care of the others while they are in hospice this way the care is done by someone they know making it a better care plan. When things get really bad we have the hospice people come in and our own people there as well. We create little jobs for them because some of them are willing to miss their regular job and lose their pay so they can spend some time with their friends and we feel that they need to get paid for them missing their regular work assignment.

“ He said to me that after all these years he should be an artist because it was such a pleasure to see the smile on her face ”

I am kind of disappointed in his last few days because I too was in the hospital and I felt that I was not spending the proper amount of time with him. I did call from the hospital bed and asked that the office set up some visits for him in the hospice center. When I got out of the hospital I went to the office for a few hours and then went right up to the hospice unit in Memorial South. I went with Patrick from our Security Staff and Dea one of our companions for another End Stage liver client. I got to spend a few minutes with Ronnie and I told him it was OK for him to let go. As I always do I ask them to pray to Jesus asking for forgiveness and I pray for the same. In this case I also told him he was our friend and that we loved him.

He was hardly breathing. I then asked Jesus to take him and he died right then and there. It was like he was waiting for us to come.

Ronnie was a gentle man, he was a tall man and I bet you he was in shape when he was younger. Even when he took his sweeping breaks he would try to spend some time in the art gallery painting some abstracts. His hands were a little shaky but they worked just as mine did, that meant a painting would come out just fine. With abstract art, the staying in the lines does not matter much. His very first painting was his last painting and he only held on to it for about 45 minutes. With his broom in one hand and his painting in another he was walking his painting to the "sun spot" in the rear of the shelter. He painted like me and the paint was thick and had some raised parts where the thick paint was. So he had to sun-dry the painting for a few hours a day. As he put his painting down to dry he

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lit up a cigarette and along came a lady who was getting some food for a poor family in the community. She saw it and asked him if he wanted to sell it. He laughed and said "what this" she said she loved it and it would go just fine in her office. She offered him \$75 for the painting and he said "are you nuts?!" He said to her \$5 and she said back to him "are you nuts?!" She then went in to her purse and took out \$100 bill and said "I forgot you delivered the painting to me and there should be a delivery charge." Ronnie with the sense of humor he had he said to the lady "You are a nutty lady to buy this hunk of whatever you call it." He uttered some other sounds that he did in a shallow voice and finally said, "I hope you enjoy my very first painting." She then reached in to her purse again and said "your first painting brings value sir so here in another \$100." He looked at me and said "Sean I should have come to your shelter a very long time ago."

I think she knew he was very sick and wanted to do something special for him but the fact was, she really did like the painting. She said she had her office painted last week and had a wallpaper border put up as well but the walls were plain and for the last week she had been trying to find a painting that went with the border and she finally got it here. She said her husband was going to take the border down tonight because she just could not get something to match it after going to about five stores.

The next day Ronnie took off the baseball hat he wore all the time and he put on a painters cap which was so cool. He said to me that after all these years he should be an artist because it was such a pleasure to see the smile on her face and he whispered did you see the smile on my face when she paid me and walked away chuckling.

What can I say about Ronnie? I can't really say a lot about a person that did not want much in life but dignity. That is all he wanted. He had pride and he never wanted that to go away. He had self-respect and kept on saying "I worked my entire life." He would show his hands all the time indicating just that ... For he did work hard his whole life. One of the reasons when he was homeless that he did not come to a shelter was that he felt that he worked so hard that he would continue to work from the streets and to get himself out of homelessness.

Ronnie you did get yourself out of homelessness.... And you got right into the hands of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

From "Mansion" To Shelter

Richard Carlsh

A few weeks ago we were graced with a woman who came in carrying celebrity status. I was so impressed with her past I had the urge to put her foot prints in concrete like Graumans Chinese Theatre in the other Hollywood. Dorothy "Robbie" Robinson entered our facility needing assistance and a place to live. She's 71 years young with a history as entertaining as watching the "E" channel. Dorothy at one time was a playboy bunny and no doubt as bushy tailed back then as she is now. She won't kiss and tell about her and Hugh though. She was the social director of the Playboy Club in Jamaica. Yes she had a tail just like the ones we picture, a little bunny tail with her outfit.

As I continue to talk to her she is almost becoming iconic in her accom-

(Continued on pg 9)

One Plus One Equals Too Many for a Shelter

Jay Osborne

Nothing worse than being a mom and having six kids and being homeless. However it becomes worse when you find out that going to a county shelter may be impossible because you have too many children to be placed. What can be worse than that? Well, try being homeless with that many kids at Christmas time. For some mothers it seems so impossible for Santa to be kept informed as to where your kids will be when he is getting ready to take off to bring your kids presents. As we all know Santa does have an emergency email for last minute changes but what would happen if Santa got his messages messed up?



The story goes like this. This beautiful family walked in to the Homeless Voice shelter about three weeks before Christmas and of course there was no room at any Inn for them in the Tri County area. But here at the Homeless Voice we made it happen by, well, just using our head and to think outside of the box. We had no room but what we did have was our art therapy art gallery that also doubles as an office for our interns, as well as our hospice suite and also a nice clean floor where we put some nice mats where mom and six children could lay their heads to sleep. In a matter of minutes we converted their home and it was their home for several weeks.

In some cases putting a homeless family in a shelter may not be the best thing to do. In this case we had to say to ourselves, what is going to be in the best interest of the family at this given time?

Mom worked and all six kids had no issues. To us they were very functional, all they were was poor. But this season they became rich in love for many of you helped this family get into their own three bedroom house they now call home.

Sean our Director told mom to go home hunting and that she did. He had one request, the request was that she find a home near the shelter this way if there was an emergency they would be close. Mom went out and found the home and Sean said, "Merry Christmas" here is your home. He had paid for the first month, last month and a partial security deposit. He then called FPL and put the electric on in his name. The next part came easy to Sean.

He called for a meeting and said to his

staff get paper and a pen and the orders came out of his mouth. He said to his assistant as soon as we are done call Santa and give him their new address. And that she did. Out of Sean's mouth came the words: "we need a tree, a couch, some beds, get them tv's- make it four of them! Get a couch- one that has a pull out bed... You know the one that is a bed! We need a few chairs, a table for the kitchen, throw some big stuffed animals around the house, ok get some of my paintings for those bare walls, toilet paper, hygiene products, we have lots of that stuff! What about a tree?! A Christmas tree with the lights and other stuff already attached to the tree. We need dishes, spoons, the rest of the food stuff. Let's give them food! Fill up the cabinets and fridge. For the furniture go to the

hotels liquidators on Dixie in Hollywood- I think they call it T and L hotel and motel liquidators. Tell them I sent you and work a deal. The guy over there he is real nice guy and he knows me he will hook us up."

So the crew went up to the T and L Liquidators place and the owners worked a deal for us for only \$225. We got almost a full house full of stuff almost brand new.

Next came the toys and of course gift cards for the older kids. So a few days before Christmas Sean sent us to Target where we got toys and cards for the kids. Sean said to the staff, we need to thank the people who give us money to run our place. Let us thank them for this would not be possible. Sean said, "Look what we can do because we think outside the box, there is no doubt that this family needed to be redone if you will, take them off of a weekly rent program they were doing outside of the shelter and set them up monthly instead. According to Sean about 23 percent of week to week renters become homeless because of that 5th week. Putting this family in a shelter was also a wrong move. They simply were poor and living week to week. In fact putting the family in the shelter system would end up costing tax payers three times than what Sean put down on this home. In fact it becomes cheaper

for all parties like the family and the tax payers to work each case differently.

Christmas was a pretty good one for this loving family because they got a house to live in. Presents came to them via Santa's elves and each child was given lots of presents. This is the time to think about all children of all nations who did not have a Christmas like we know it. This family would have been living on the floor of Sean's Art Gallery if you all did not buy this Homeless Voice newspaper. It kinds of reminds you of the Homeless Jesus Christ the maker of this world. Who would have thought this little Baby Jesus would be who He was? Can we look at all these other children who are dying because they have no food or who have no place to sleep, who would they be? We may never know in some cases because they will die off for lack of food, water, shelter and love.

Sean said to the staff, we need to thank the people who give us money to run our place. Let us thank them for this would not be possible. Sean said, "Look what we can do because we think outside the box, there is no doubt that this family needed to be redone if you will, take them off of a weekly rent program they were doing outside of the shelter and set them up monthly instead. According to Sean about 23 percent of week to week renters become homeless because of that 5th week. Putting this family in a shelter was also a wrong move. They simply were poor and living week to week. In fact putting the family in the shelter system would end up costing tax payers three times than what Sean put down on this home. In fact it becomes cheaper



Getting the house ready for the family



New mattresses for the family's sweet dreams



Christmas elves Patrick and Adam with a special delivery

\$200,000 Grant Helps Homeless Students

Merissa Green

Homeless students in Polk need food and transportation and BB&T Bank is helping the Polk County School District meet that need. BB&T donated \$200,000 to the district's Hearth Project, which provides aid to the homeless population.

The donation helps fund a weekend feeding program for 600 students and subsidizes the cost of transportation to get the students back and forth to school, said Dee Dee Wright, homeless services specialist for the School District.

The food is distributed at the schools where the students attend. They are provided with packaged weekend meals. With some of the funds, the district was able to purchase a van to help students who have been displaced from their original bus routes.

"The van provides short-term transportation until we can get the bus route together," Wright said.

Ben Pressentin, BB&T's city executive, said BB&T set aside \$1 million to take care of homeless students in the Central Florida region.

The donation is the result of the bank's CEO, Kelly King, watching the CBS show "60 Minutes" and seeing a special report about homeless students in the area, Pressentin said.

"He reached out to the folks in our market," Pressentin said. "This is something we identified as being a huge need. As we continue to stay involved, we're inspired and humbled."

The federal definition of a homeless student is broad, but it mainly identifies situations in which a student lacks a regular and adequate place to sleep.

Wright said the donation from BB&T is overwhelming and the largest single donation the Hearth Project has received.

"I was very shocked because it is making a true impact in the lives of the homeless kids," she said.

The Hearth Project, which operates on donations and grants, received \$120,000 in federal funding this year. The money pays for Hearth staff salaries and benefits and funds in-shelter tutoring.

The students are given toiletry packages, school uniforms and school supplies. Through the Hearth Project, district officials also provide transportation for displaced students to remain at the schools they had been enrolled in.

Last year, the district had 2,401 homeless students enrolled. This year, the enrollment is 1,737 students.

Media attention in 2011 of the Hearth Project's needs led to more than \$8,000 in donations from readers.

TAMPAS HOMELESS TRIBUTE

(Continued from pg 1)

ple who can be considered homeless in Hillsborough County, said Lesa Weikel, a spokeswoman for the homeless coalition.

"We continue to try to help people understand the risks homeless people face. We did get some language into the hate crime law to include attacks on people because they are homeless," Weikel said. "Unfortunately, because they are on the streets they remain the most vulnerable."

As vulnerable as Rolando Rivera Arroyo, 73, who used a wheelchair and was murdered in August in a South Tampa church parking lot for reasons that still haven't emerged.

But other people aren't the only danger Hillsborough's homeless face. Time on the streets and vices took many more lives than violence this year.

Bob Jacobs, 60, remembered most of the stories Ronald Castro, 67, told him. Castro was born in New

York, the youngest of 10 sons, and grew up in Pennsylvania. As a U.S. Army vet, Castro got a monthly check from the Veteran's Administration. Drinking kept him from holding a shelter bed. Before Castro's death in the spring, his health deteriorated and his memory faded.

"It was like he was in a daze," said Jacobs, who is also a homeless U.S. Army vet. "He used to be happy-go-lucky."

Jacobs came out to remember his friend. He said he comes every year because inevitably, he will have known someone who died on the streets. He's been homeless himself on and off for stints as long as 10 years. This time, he's only been on the streets for two months.

Members of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Incorporated handed out blankets and sleeping bags after the 40-minute ceremony.

Jacobs had other hopes for beating the cold.

"I really need some gloves," he said. "I just have to cover up tonight."

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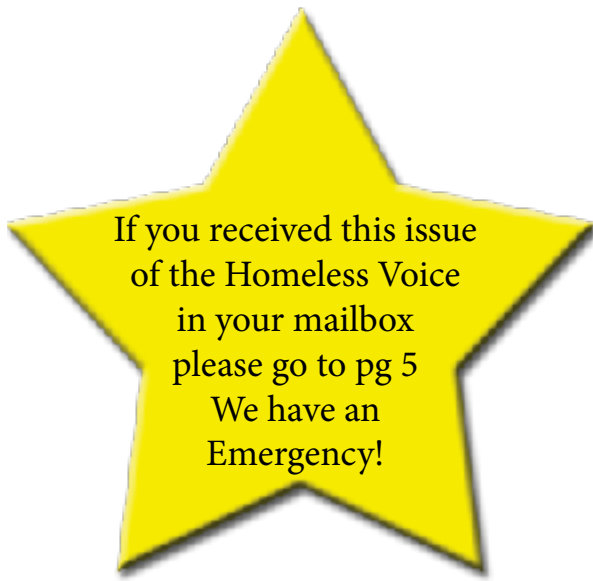
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Mass Shootings and Something to Think About

(Continued from pg 1)

I think the first thing we need to do is that we need to pay attention to the people we know, the people we see, and the people who do strange things that many of us do not do. Gun shops who are selling lots of ammo to a kid, can you just stop for a moment and think about it. Do you not have a child of your own? Why not stall or delay the sale if the state law does not require it. Ask some questions to the buyer and a simple "is everything ok" statement made to the buyer. If you are suspicious call your local police department.

When dealing with an active shooter stalling them and delaying them is essential. This will allow more time for the first responding officers to arrive on scene. The more time the "bad guy" spends trying to get to his target the less he will actually kill. Reason being, hopefully the responding officers may get their before the first shot. Having automatic barriers or stalling devices or systems in place to also stall them will also allow more time for those responding officers to get into position to take the active shooter down by force or by other means. These systems should be designed to limit the person from even gaining entry or if they get in, to slow them up while inside. A system that could incorporate parents who are available during the day who may want to assist with a school based crime watch. These parents could be on the outside perimeter or the inside parking lot looking at people who arrive and to be able to communicate with police officers who are assigned to the school. This way if they saw someone come out of their car with a rifle or bullet proof vest they can alert the school or officer and the school could go to a lock down mode. Having doors that locked automatically would help to help the teacher who may be a little slower moving to get their kids to safety. Perhaps having a security system that is observed at the home of parents who do not work where they can sit and watch the parking lot or outside perimeter looking for someone who may jump the fence. Again all these things allow for a system that alerts first responders faster and alerts the schools to get ready for an attack. In turn this will allow a stall where the "bad guy" kills less people. In the state of Texas they use a security video system on the border where they have their citizens watch these cameras to report people who come in to the country illegally.

Making sure that the school is prepared at all times and to teach our kids that when there is an emergency that they need to do as their teachers tell them. Students should know how to respond. Should they run or should they barricade themselves in a room, or should they hit the floor? These are things that should be taught to them. Teachers are the most important part of this plan. They all need to know what to do. Teachers should know all parts of their school and every place there is to hide. You can have all this in place but none of it will work if you do not pay attention to what is going

on around you.

There are two other areas of concern that I would like to address and the first one is a touchy situation. I have spoken to members of SWAT teams some of them have been retired for over 20 years and some are still on the teams. In about 40 percent of them, they stated they agreed to this upcoming question. The remaining 60 percent said they did not agree to this statement. And the question / statement is..... Should teachers be armed? Should some of the staff be armed? Should there be other forms of protection, such as taser guns, bean bag guns, and others forms like tear gas guns or tear gas grenades used in conjunction with auto locking doors leading to the classrooms?

I will not respond to all those but rather give a little insight to a possible plan like the Federal Flight Deck Officer Program used to protect our airliners.

Basically this plan was activated after 911 where the plan would allow certain people who flew the planes to be armed as well as being sworn Federal Sky Marshals. Basically the flight crew was allowed to be armed in the aircraft and while in the air they were the sky marshal. They had to take a short class with firearms safety. A lot of the pilots were in the armed forces and already had firearms and combat type of training so giving them some safety tips in critical incidents as well as special ammo for airplanes made their cockpits safer. So would putting armed teachers be a way to deter these types of shootings? I do not think they would deter anything based on the anger that is present and if mental health is involved these armed teachers may not be a deterrent. However would them being armed stall the subject or give them time to take down the active shooter and the answer may be yes. However, not everyone can shoot to kill, but then on the other hand people want to protect our children and their posture may firm up to say "yes I can do it."

If we are not going to have police officers or armed security officers at every school then we need to think that there may be a time for us to arm teachers who want to take the time to get certified to carry a fire arm and to be trained in critical incident techniques. I feel that the minimal hours used for the Federal Flight Deck Officers did not offer adequate training. Maybe if an 80 hours course could be developed with continuing education, then they must qualify each and every year and take a refresher course of about 24 hours every year a valid program could be designed.

A lot of schools have unarmed security and no police officers on site, and that is not good. Especially where a town may be large and not that many police officers working at the same time. If this is the case the response time may be longer than what we would want. Remember the response time is so important when it comes to the active shooter. If this is the case then we really need to think about using teachers in a reserve police officer program where we can take some teachers and give them the powers of a volunteer police officer where they

can teach or even coach but also be able to react in a situation as a reserve police officer. The cost would be about \$3500 in training and another \$1500 in equipment. This can be done. This would make the first responding officers there in a matter of seconds. Each second the shooter is busy trying to defend himself gives him less children to kill. Having a system in place like this is a workable plan and the first part of a plan like this would be for the current police who know the demographics of their jurisdiction to explore to see if it can work. It is a mixed feeling among law enforcement.

The second area of concern is the use of smart systems in place like the applications on our smart phones used routinely by us. The use of Gunshot Location Systems is used by public safety agencies. The police refer to them as "gunshot location systems," and have been used in dispatch centers for fast reaction to gunfire incidents. Basically they are used in towns where there are lots of shootings. These smart systems help the police to get to areas before someone even calls 911. The system locates where a gun went off by acquiring all forms of data and then the police respond to that area. If we could get these systems fine-tuned where they could be installed in schools would the police get to the scene faster? These systems can denote what type of guns have been shot off, count the number of rounds that were fired, and locate the shooter and tell the direction of fire.

If a system was in place like this and shots were fired on the outside of the school would the system then lock the doors to the classroom automatically and alert the school to a lockdown at the same time automatically moving the video security camera systems where the gunshot came from and to be shown in real time to the police dispatch center and also in real time to the responding officers car. The system could alert the police who are assigned to the school so that officer may go to the exact area of the gun shots containing the shooter therefore less death. Again the faster we get to the active shooter then less death occurs. This system could move the rest of the children away from the shooters locations. If no police were assigned to the school then the teacher or staff member of the school who was a reserve officer would be on scene in seconds.

No matter what systems we now have in place for the safety of our children- we need to do more. The time has come to sit down and protect the most precious resource in our world, our children! We no longer can tolerate the mass numbers of school shootings. We just owe it to the ones who have already died in their honor. Put money where we need to put it and that is to our little ones so at the end of the day parents can see their smiling children sitting at the table enjoying that after school snack.

THIS YEAR MY WISH FOR A GOOD YEAR IS THAT WE ALL PRAY FOR THE LORD TO SEND A CURE DOWN FOR ALL CANCERS.

LORD WE ASK YOU TO GIVE WISDOM TO ALL CANCER RESEARCHERS AND SCIENTISTS SO THEY CAN COME UP WITH A CURE.

LORD WE ASK THAT YOU HEAL ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE DYING OF CANCER.

LORD WE ASK THIS IN YOUR NAME AND WE ASK THAT IT HAPPEN IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

LORD WE ASK THAT YOU HEAL ALL PEOPLE WHO ARE DYING OF CANCER.

LORD WE ASK THIS IN YOUR NAME AND WE ASK THAT IT HAPPEN IN THE NEXT THREE YEARS.

IN JESUS'S NAME AMEN

Students should know how to respond. Should they run or should they barricade themselves in a room, or should they hit the floor?

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Jeremiah of All Trades

Richard Carlish

Born in Alabama, Jeremiah learned about work ethics at a very young age. His family had a 263 acre farm involving everything from Okra to cows. It didn't take Jeremiah long to figure out you milk the cows and not the okra. Seven days a week from sunset to sundown he worked that farm hitting all 263 acres of it at some point or other during the week. As he became older he moved onto the steel mill. Not because the farm was too much hard work, but because it was becoming obvious Jeremiah was a curious sort and wanted to learn another trade. At night on the weekends he would DJ at his brothers club. Cow milker, steel miller and DJ. Although most of us know you take a job like DJ to meet chicks and such, but I actually believe him when he says he did it for the simple reason of something new to do. Quite a diversified resume so far, but we aren't finished yet. He then attended Kennedy King College where he studied to become what he thought would be his final career choice and that was as an electrician. There were no cushy jobs for Jeremiah in his life. He never took the easy road. He was raised with the idea you earn an honest day's wages with an honest day's work, although I still say



the DJ gig was to meet chicks. So, as an electrician for 40 years in Chicago, Jeremiah had his hand in many of the high rises that make up its skyline. Helping make the city light up at night and function as a thriving metropolis during the day. Well, as it turns out electrician wasn't his last line of expertise after all. Coming to Florida to retire a couple of years ago Jeremiah came to us looking for a little help about getting some of his medical and financial information completed as well as needing a place to stay. It took us all about three days to see those very same work ethics he had while "uttering" to himself while milking those cows and working that farm. Just helping out around the building as many are required to do their first few days, it was obvious he wasn't a helper, but more of a doer. He has a strong sense of initiative and pride in his work. Now our Head Housekeeper and in charge of the department Jeremiah has taken a position he knew

nothing about and become a sanitation and cleanliness wizard. Hosing sidewalks, sweeping, mopping floors over and over, cleaning bathrooms and all the other chores involved seem easy to him. Not only does he do a fantastic job keeping the building clean, he also doubles as Mr. Fix it. Not only can he clean a toilet he can take it apart and repair it if need be. He is truly a "Jeremiah" of all trades, and more. He is a sweet, caring and genuinely nice human being and a pleasure to know and be around. I can honestly call him a friend.

From "Mansion" To Shelter

(Continued from pg 6)

plishments. French's Mustard, Calgon "take me away" and Alpo dog food were all commercials she was in. That displays the diversity of her talent being able to be some sensuous woman in a soothing bubble bath to selling dog food. I wonder where the mustard comes in. Anyway, "Robbie" had a role in the movie Donnie Brasco with Johnny Depp and Al Pacino playing a card dealer at the casino, and although she would like to "Forget about it" she knows it's part of her past and needs to cherish it even though it brings back memories of when life was grand.

So, even at 71 Dorothy is as entertaining as she was back in her wild days. We enjoy hearing her stories and the excitement in her voice that comes with them. She may not be a bunny anymore due to her age, but she has the energy and zest of a rabbit, getting along just fine regardless of her life without the stardom. Her sarcastic wit and overall personality makes her a pleasure to be around. No foot prints will ever be adorned in concrete in the sidewalk in the front of our building, but she definitely leaves her mark with us in many other ways.



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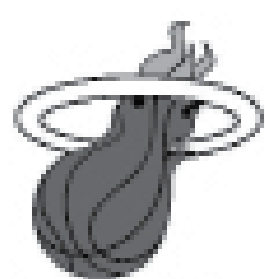


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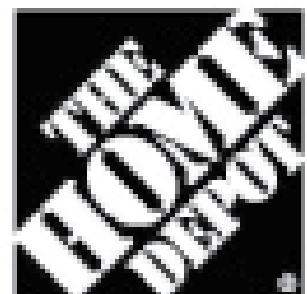


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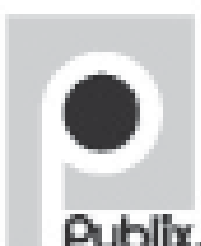
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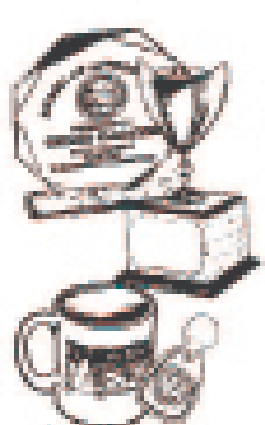


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Mass Shootings & Something to Think About

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