



Students on the campus of Winston-Salem State University accepted the challenge from The Bethesda Center to sleep outside on Friday, Nov. 20 to raise awareness of homelessness in the area. Submitted photo

Residents sleep outside to bring awareness to area homelessness

BY TEVIN STINSON
THE CHRONICLE

Dozens of people ditched the comfort and warmth of their beds to sleep outside in Winston-Salem in support of The Bethesda Center's Sleep Out Challenge.

Just a few miles away on the campus of Winston-Salem State University, students accepted the challenge, also.

The annual event is designed to raise awareness around hunger and homelessness in the area.

The Bethesda Center has long held a mission to reduce homelessness in the community. By providing temporary shelter and support services, the center helps to improve the lives of homeless men and women.

The Sleep Out Challenge is one way the center gains local support.

During this year's event held at the Corpening Plaza, 231 W. First St., participants had to endure temperatures in the low 30s and a breeze that made it feel much cooler.

Many of the participants said it was well worth it. They felt it was impor-

tant to participate because it could happen to anyone at any time.

"Homelessness could strike anyone at any time for a number of different reasons," said Marion Smith of Winston-Salem. "I wanted to show my support because we all fall on hard times at some point. There are a lot of people in this city who don't have anywhere to go at night."

In recent years, members of the City Council and a number of non-profit organizations have put a major emphasis on ending poverty and homelessness in the city.

Last year statistics showed more than 24 percent of the citizens in Winston-Salem were living at or below the federal poverty level. That is a higher rate than a number of major cities in the state, including more populated cities such as Charlotte and Raleigh.

While residents gathered at the Corpening Plaza to accept the challenge on Nov. 20, just a few miles away on the campus of Winston-Salem State University, a number of students slept in cardboard

boxes and sleeping bags stationed near the Phi Beta Sigma monument on campus.

For the past 19 years, members of the Delta Alpha Chapter at WSSU have participated in the challenge and encouraged other students and universities to do the same.

The entire week leading up to the sleep out, the Delta Alpha Chapter of Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity Inc. collected nonperishable food items, school supplies and clothing items for the homeless.

At the start of the night's festivities, Chancellor Elwood L. Robinson stopped by to applaud the students for representing the university in such a positive way and for showing support to such a serious issue.

"This just shows what type of students we have at WSSU. The fight against poverty is one that affects us all," he continued. "We are cultivating students who are going to change this community and this country. This proves how conscientious our students are about what's going on in the world today."

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Holiday Parade

and City Christmas Tree Lighting Ceremony



PARADE at 5 p.m. Starts on 4th St. at Poplar then south on Liberty St.

Saturday, Dec. 5th

TREE LIGHTING at 6:30 p.m. Corpening Plaza 1st and Liberty



Holiday Collection Changes

CITY OFFICES CLOSED DEC. 24, 25 & JAN. 1
CITYLINK 311 CLOSED DEC. 25 & JAN. 1

WEEK OF CHRISTMAS, DEC. 21-25
Garbage: Tues. & Weds. normal schedule, Thursday on Monday, Dec. 28 and Friday on Tuesday, Dec. 29

Recycling: RED WEEK, Mon. - Thurs. normal schedule; Friday postponed one day

Yard-Waste Carts: Mon. & Tues. collected on Mon., Weds. on Tues., Thurs. on Weds.

WEEK OF NEW YEAR'S DAY, DEC. 28 - JAN. 1
Garbage: Tues. and Weds. postponed one day; Thurs. on Mon., Jan. 4; Fri. on Tues., Jan. 5. Week of Jan. 4: All collections postponed one day; Friday on Monday, Jan. 11

Recycling: BLUE WEEK; Monday - Thursday as usual, Friday postponed one day

Yard-Waste Carts: Normal schedule

HAVE A QUESTION ABOUT A HOLIDAY COLLECTION? NOT SURE OF YOUR RECYCLING WEEK? CALL CITYLINK 311 or 727-8000 or visit CITYOFWS.ORG



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