

PERSPECTIVES

America is still shutting its eyes to the homeless crisis

Danielle Herney
Staff Writer

The crisis of the homeless has not been officially addressed as one of our nation's priorities; the plight of the homeless in America has only magnified in the past few years. At present it is estimated that three million Americans do not have homes. More women, children and young men are finding it harder to meet their

monthly rents or mortgage payments and to feed themselves. As a result they are forced to face life on the streets, in constant search of homeless shelters and soup kitchens.

Why is this happening? The most basic explanation is that land, mortgage money, materials, operating expenses, etc. are rising faster than the incomes of lower income Americans. Furthermore, low income housing is not profitable for construction contractors.

The percentages of homeless people with physical and mental problems is now decreasing, and the percentages of homeless families without the income necessary to afford housing is increasing. Forty years ago, the alcoholic male embodied America's conception of the homeless. Now, in many cases, alcoholism is recognized as a result of the homeless situation rather than a cause of the situation. Private urban renewal, so called gentrification, has been moving tens of

thousands of units from lower rent status to luxury housing or ownership status as condominiums. People simply don't have the money to rent or buy the housing that is on the market.

Every night, according to 1988 estimates by the National Academy of Sciences, 100,000 children go to sleep homeless. By the year 2000, if current trends continue, millions of American children will have spent at least part of their childhoods without a place to call home.

There is no simple solution to the injustices that the homeless suffer. However, the first step in changing the injustice is by providing affordable housing. Every child deserves to be given a chance, a chance to learn, grow, and mature in a stable home with life's basic necessities. For millions of homeless adults today, there is little hope. With changes in housing affordability in the future and efforts of the Housing Now! coalition, these children will have a chance.

The Housing Now! march in Washington: A call to action

Laurel Nesbitt
Editorials Editor

Those who have been bombarded this week with literature and urgent pleas to

march on Washington, D.C. with the Housing Now! coalition are to be bombarded further.

The Housing Now! coalition is endorsed by nearly one hundred different organizations, ranging from Greenpeace U.S.A. to the National Student Campaign Against

Hunger and Homelessness. It is a coalition formed specifically to rally in Washington, D.C. on October 7. People from across the nation will be travelling to D.C. to unite in a peaceful demonstration of their common concern for the homeless in America.

Guilford College is organizing a group of students to participate in this historic event, joining the 22 busloads of North Carolinians already planning to march. Cost of the round trip bus ticket to Washington is \$28. Some students are planning to find their own means of transportation; however, parking is limited and nearly impossible for this particular weekend in the Capitol. Students are encouraged to spare themselves some of the hassle of parking while sharing in this unique bus extravaganza with many other Guilford students and (hopefully) faculty.

Buses for Washington will be leaving

from the college on Friday, October 6 at around midnight and will be returning to Greensboro late Saturday night. The marchers will leave the Pentagon at 10 a.m. Saturday and will rally on the mall at noon.

Those who are interested in participating in the march but have not yet signed up still have the opportunity to do so. A meeting will be held for all interested persons on Thursday, September 21 at 8:00 p.m. at Hildebrandt House.

Come march with us to voice your concerns for the abominable injustice of homelessness. Housing Now!

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For more information (or to confirm bus reservations) contact Laurel Nesbitt at P.O. Box 17443 or Danielle Herney at 854-3247, P.O. Box 17247. Bus reservations must be confirmed in the last week of September.

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Treading lightly on Mother Earth

Brywn Malbasa
Staff Writer

My feet are cushioned by the dampened earth as I walk through Guilford's woods. The trees hovering above make my pathway dark, except for a few breaks of sunshine through the canopy of leaves. These trees whisper stories to me about people who have walked before me, and those who have yet to come. I realize I am not the first to enjoy the woods and will not be the last. For the extent of my stroll these woods become mine entirely. Every so often my solitude is interrupted by a playful shout or rolling laughter travelling from a distance. They are welcome noises that remind me of my need for other human beings.

People have been around for a long time; however, the trees have been here longer.

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