



Photo by Mike Cunningham

Clyde Cutler and Ann Hensel proudly indicate the building in which the new shelter will be housed.

Shelter to open From Page A3

ating assistance and purchasing equipment. From the 1987 distribution of the funds, the city received \$29,000 which was distributed among all the city's shelters, but Samaritan Ministries did not receive a share. This year, however, the city received \$5,000 to purchase the shelter's commercial washer and dryer.

There has been some dissent in the community about the Samaritan Ministries receiving all the HUD funds this year, Lett said. "There's some thought that the new construction could have been better used," she said. "But Samaritan chose to build because they were adding on to the existing facility and owned the land to build on."

Samaritan Ministries didn't receive the ESG funds last year because it had not yet been built, and ESG funds only go to existing structures.

So when the city got approval for \$5,000 this year, the priority was the Samaritan shelter, Lett said. Construction of the shelter began last spring and was finished last month.

The City Council for Services to the Homeless coordinates the services of all the agencies who serve homeless people in some

way, including the Salvation Army, Department of Social Services, church soup kitchens, and city police efforts, Lett said. The council consists of the chief executive officials of all agencies serving the homeless and meets quarterly to minimize duplication of services.

The council voted in June, 1987 to support construction of the Samaritan Ministries shelter. After that the fund-raising process began and things have quickly fallen into place since then. "We broke ground in March, and it was finished by Aug. 1," Hensel said. "The strange thing is that people seem to become involved in this. It's been incredible to watch."

Winston-Salem now has about six homeless shelters in operation in addition to the Salvation Army Lighthouse and seasonal church shelters, Lett said.

Five other shelters in the city, ARCA, Holly House, Fellowship Home, Prodigal House, and Family Services, Inc., accept only clients with specific problems. These agencies deal only with clients who have specific problems such as alcoholics, the mentally ill, battered women, and ex-offenders who have completed their jail time.

Who are homeless? From Page A3

white, middle-aged male. Almost 95 percent of those interviewed were male, and 84 percent were white.

Dr. H. Rembert Malloy, a volunteer at the Bethesda Center, however, says he sees more Afro-Americans than whites at the center. The Bethesda Center gives people shelter during the day. "I would say we have a larger percentage of blacks than of whites," he said. "But that's a day shelter. A large number of them are not homeless at Bethesda."

Malloy said, however, that the city survey accurately portrayed the proportion of homeless women. "We get about that many women," he said. "We never have more than five or six women."

Hensel thinks she may present the city with a different picture of the city's homeless population after she studies the people who frequent Samaritan Ministries. "I never did believe those (city task force) figures," she said. Hensel will gather information through in-depth interviews with every person who stays at the shelter.

According to the city's survey, the majority of the city's homeless have an elementary school education, are either single or divorced, and are habitually homeless, meaning they were on the streets for more than 30 days the year before they were interviewed. Most named the cause of their homelessness as "social crises" or unemployment, followed by alcohol abuse problems. Five said they were victims of the housing crisis.

About 36 percent of those interviewed had been unemployed for more than two years, and 23 percent had only been unemployed for a month or less. Most reported making most of their money by spot labor, collecting aluminum cans, or from social security checks.

When asked about their personal problems, 26 percent denied having any, 21 percent named alcohol abuse, 19 percent said they had physical problems, 10 percent said their permanent residence was the problem, and 10 percent reported getting a job as their primary problem.

About 21 percent of the homeless interviewed said they had received treatment by a psychiatrist. About 53 percent reported having a substance abuse problem, and 37 percent said they had been through detoxification for substance abuse.

The police also made several observations about the characteristics of the homeless people they encounter, according to the task force report. Seven seemed to have a substance abuse problem, four were frequently seen on the streets, three were chronically homeless, three had been jailed for trespassing, and two appeared to have psychiatric problems.

Police said two people claimed to have lived in the woods all winter. One was a migrant worker, and one begs for a living. Another said he came to Winston-Salem from the mountains because he was lonely.

When the interviews were conducted, about 43 percent of the homeless reported they spent the previous night in the downtown church shelter program. Others reported they stayed at the Rescue Mission, in the bushes or woods, in jail, at the Salvation Army, in an old car, or with a friend or relative.

When asked what city services could help them most, 14 people said none were needed. About 11 people said a year-round shelter is needed, 10 people "didn't know", and eight people said "more jobs". Other less popular suggestions included public housing, recreation, job training, better sidewalks, food kitchens, "understanding of street people", preaching, "more pride in downtown", and more downtown stores.

When asked where they would prefer to get help, most named a relative. The second largest group said they wanted no help from anyone. A shelter organization was the third most popular preference for help.

Cole From Page A9

While he admits it would be easy to indulge in self-pity, Cole said he finds the practice rather useless and time-consuming. And although he accepts occasional assistance from classmates, he doesn't like sitting around feeling sorry for himself and won't let anyone else feel sorry for him either. Cole proudly reports that he can escort visitors around every inch of campus along specialized routes which he has mapped out to shorten the distance between his classes.

He curtails questions about his use of a wheelchair with the response, "I'm in my chair on and off, but I'm able to walk, just not as well as you might. I would rather do stuff for myself. If I need assistance I can always ask for it because there are nice people here who offer to help me. I'm pretty independent, but I can get even more so. But, I definitely can walk, but not as well as you."

Cole has dedicated himself to "staying on top of my studies," and said that that preoccupation doesn't leave him much time to think about the things that have happened to him or about what things he may not be able to do. For now, much of his spare time is spent at the library, his "favorite building on campus." If he has any gripe at all about life on a college campus, he said, it is minor.

"Doors are my downfall, but other than that I get around real well," he said, smiling. "I feel that anything can be conquered. All you need to do is put your mind to it. Let God lead you and everything else will fall in place. I just thank God for being alive, being able to go to Ireland, my family and coming to Winston-Salem State."

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