

THE HOMELESS VOICE

FLORIDAS LARGEST STREET NEWSPAPER



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

9 year old building shelters for the homeless

Hailey Fort has a friend. His name is Edward. "He's really nice," she said. "He's easy to talk with."

Edward is not the typical person you'd want your 9-year-old daughter hanging out with, but Hailey is no typical girl.

Edward is homeless. He lost his job at a local supermarket.

"I don't really want him to be rained on by all the bad weather we get here," said Hailey.

It's a good thing for Edward that Hailey is pretty good with power tools.

She spends much of her spare time these days working with nail guns, hydraulic staplers and electric drills in her yard. But she isn't building a clubhouse or tree fort.

That's kid stuff.

"I'm building a mobile sleeping shelter," she said in her quiet voice.

The shelter is an 8x4-foot wooden structure, complete with windows, a front door and insulation. She plans to give it to Edward. Aside from using big power saws, Hailey does all of the work herself, with guidance from her mom and her contractor grandfather who gives telephone assistance from his home in Arizona.

The kid knows her stuff.

"If there was no insulation he would get cold. If there was no tar paper he would get a draft," she said.

Here's how it all started.

A few years ago Hailey saw a homeless man on the street and thought it would be nice to buy him a sandwich. She and her mom did so. From there Hailey figured, why give one person a sandwich



when you can feed many more with a garden.

So she planted a garden that she harvests for the local food bank. She donated 128 pounds last year.

From that garden grew the shelter idea, as well as various other efforts providing health and hygiene supplies to the homeless.

"If she had her way we'd have mobile sleeping shelters taking up our front lawn," said Hailey's mother, Miranda.

Hailey received a \$3,000 grant from Together Rising and momastery.com for her efforts. She plans to use the money to build 11 more of shelters, so that not just her friend Edward, but some of his friends will also have warm, dry places to sleep.

The family says they hope to deploy the shelters in Bremerton's permanent Tent City, which is supposed to open later this year. Each shelter costs about \$300 to build, thanks to a 50% discount in materials provided by the Silverdale Lowes Hardware store.

It just doesn't seem right that there are homeless people, I think everyone should have a place to live.

"It just doesn't seem right that there are homeless people," Hailey said. "I think everyone should have a place to live."

A GoFundMe account has been set up on Hailey's Facebook page for people interested in donating to her cause.

Hundreds of Homeless People Seek Help in Everett WA

John Ryan

One day a year, it's a lot easier for homeless people in Snohomish County to get some basic things that you might take for granted. Things like shoes, backpacks or pet care.

More than a thousand people lined up outside an elementary school in Everett on Thursday to get a little help.

Steph Stark and her sister came down from Stanwood at the north end of the county. Stark has been living in a tent along the Stillaguamish River.

"I'm having my hair cut," Stark said. "It's a blessing."

And how long had it been since her last haircut? "At least four years."

After her cut, she was going to get some new glasses.

United Way officials say their one-day event helps alleviate suffering but broader efforts are needed to address the root causes of homelessness. Stark and others flooding into the event say they see more homelessness than ever in Snohomish County.

United Way officials say their one-day event helps alleviate suffering but broader efforts are needed to address the root causes of homelessness.

"Oh, there's a lot more people and a lot more families," she said. "That's the sad thing."

Jason Knowles of Everett sees it similarly.

"Seems to be the worst I've ever seen it, honestly, as far as the amount of homelessness," said Knowles, who got out of jail a few weeks ago and has been staying at the Everett Gospel Mission shelter.

But county officials say fewer people, not more, are living on the streets and in the woods of Snohomish County.

"We've seen significant declines in family homelessness in particular and in veteran homelessness," said M.J. Brell-Vujovic, who heads the county's human services department.

Nobody really knows how many people are homeless in Snohomish County, or anywhere else.

Around the country, volunteers try to count the homeless on one night each January. They miss a lot of people who don't want their camps to be found or counted. And some years might get more volunteers pulling those all-nighters than other years.

Still, Snohomish County appears to be doing a lot better than King County. The one-night counts show homelessness increasing sharply in King County.



In both counties, homeless shelters turn people away each night.

"Our shelters are still operating at capacity," said Snohomish County's Brell-Vujovic. "So there's still a huge unmet need."

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

~Monthly Angels~

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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. Please visit: www.hvoice.org/member

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Fill out this form and along with your check for \$15 mail to:

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Cut along the line and mail in

Donate Online: HomelessVoice.org/Donate

Donations are tax deductible & help South Florida's Homeless

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 or anyone in need of food. The COSAC Foundation opened its first homeless shelter in 1999 and named it



COSAC Quarters (the shelter money was raised by spare change). 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 vision is 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.



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HOMELESS VOICE

\$25

Buys a hot meal for ten people

\$50

Buys 2 bags of groceries for a homeless family

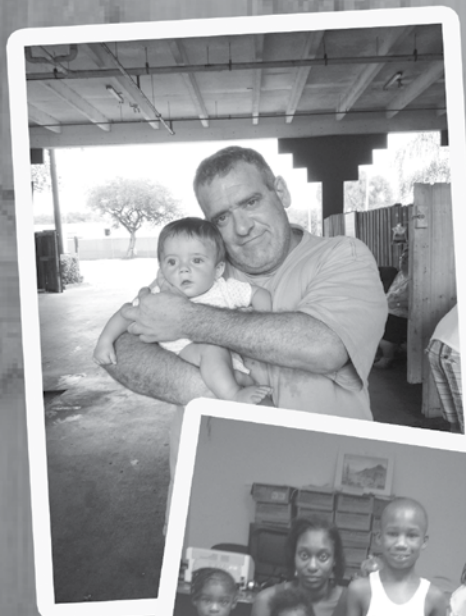
\$100

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



Photo by Design Dorm

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



Don't Let
the Doors
Close on
These
Children

~ Cathy's Prayer List ~

- * Amy & Mr. Jason
- * Lorena
- * Lilly
- * Beth Ann
- * The Coakleys
- * Eddie Mercer
- * Bob
- * Michael Loffredo
- * Natacha Lewis
- * Steven Green
- * Josh Wynn
- * Bianca
- * James
- * Lois
- * Robert Tansey
- * Veronica & John
- * Carmen Cononie

- * Mary Summers
- * Cassandra Wilson
- * Charlene Duarte
- * Rusty Columbo
- * Devon Bailey & Family
- * Maria Dragon
- * Vemonda Lane & Family
- * Charlie
- * Mr. Mike
- * Tiffany
- * Dvora
- * Ed Giampietro
- * Kristan David Perez
- * Tommy & Joe
- * GERALYN
- * Little Ryan
- * Earnest Bowens & Family

To add a name to Cathy's Prayer List, call or text 954-410-6275

Coming Soon!

Lena's Loving Advice



Within the next few issues, we will be trying out the column
Lena's Loving Advice by Lena Larkin.

Please send in your problems for Lena to start answering them.
You can write directly to lenaslovingadvice@gmail.com

On Spirituality...Steeped in Prayer

Steeped in prayer. Have you ever been steeped in prayer? I have.

In 1991 I had the opportunity to go to Medjagorie, where six young children had been visited by our Blessed Mother, and were seeing Mary every Thursday evening since 1983. On the occasions of these apparitions, our lady would visit with the children and then impart a message for the world.

These messages became a way of life for those who believed.

When I showed up, the little town of Medjagorie was the most peaceful place I had ever set foot.

It was a long flight out of Newark, landed in Dubrovnik, and rode in a van for a few hours up the mountain. We arrived at our guest house after dark, met some other pilgrims from the Philippines, Chicago, Boston, New York, talked for an hour and then to bed. Early rise, eastern European breakfast. Mass was at St. James in English at 9:00 am and that's what we all did every day. After breakfast and mass, we met with our tour guide, she was great and she picked up quickly what things we were interested in. She had some pull and got us in to some fun things. There were 300 priests there from all over the world, and the week was designed for them. We got the chance to sit in with many priests and four of the visionaries. They told amazing stories of what it was like when Mary appeared to them. They said many things in common, such as they all said that the Lady was the most beautiful person they had ever seen. When she was in their midst they said it felt like heaven. It was starting to become quite amazing, quite surprising at what I was feeling.

One day as I was walking home from Apparition Hill or Cross Mountain, I was looking at a barn door and a cross appeared on it. At first I thought that it was nailed to the door, but it wasn't, then I looked away and there was another cross, wherever I let my eyes fix on something a gold cross appeared in front of it.

I couldn't believe it, I just bounced home like I was in another world. I slept well that night and when I did wake in the morning, I was praying the Our Father. I completely forgot about the crosses until I got up and there was one on the door. Again, wherever I focused my eyes there appeared a see through gold cross. I became used to seeing everything that way. It sounds scary or really weird but it was neither. This



In some of the early messages from The Blessed Mother, she asked for all to pray more, to pray with the heart. To pray especially the Rosary.

was a time where I only felt peace, there was no fear or negative emotion at all.

In some of the early messages from The Blessed Mother, she asked for all to pray more, to pray with the heart. To pray especially the Rosary. To receive the sacraments regularly, to go to mass every day. To go to confession monthly, to pray every day three rosaries. The Joyful, the Sorrowful, and the Glorious mysteries, and to not fall asleep until you had.

These came to me as if from God. They were a command that could not be refused. I did everything that Mary said to do in her messages. I fasted Wednesdays and Fridays for more than four years, I didn't read any book but the bible for eight years. I went to mass every day for more than ten years without missing a day. I prayed with my whole heart three rosaries a day, the fifteen prayers of St. Bridget, and assorted others, filling much of my day.

I was steeped in prayer!! I have never been happier than I was for those wonderful years.

One day about six months after I had come home from Medjagorie, I looked at something and realized there was

no cross there. I was so sad, then I was troubled. Was I doing something wrong? Then I felt nothing but gratitude as I realized the cross was a great gift from a great friend. The greatest gift the world has ever known. Deacon Bob

Note: In 2002, Pope John Paul II added the Luminous Mysteries to the Rosary.

~ How To Pray the Rosary ~

First make the sign of the cross and say the Apostles' Creed. Next pray 1 Our Father followed by 3 Hail Mary's. Pray 1 Glory Be and then this prayer "O my Jesus, forgive us our sins, save us from the fires of hell. Lead all souls to Heaven, especially those in most need of Your mercy," then start with the 1st Mystery. Then say 1 Our Father followed by 10 Hail Mary's. Continue through all 5 Mysteries and finish with Hail Holy Queen.

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, his only son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died and was buried; he descended into hell; on the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty; from there he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer (Our Father)

Our father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name; Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptaion; but deliver us from evil. Amen.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou amongst women and blessed is the fruit of they womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

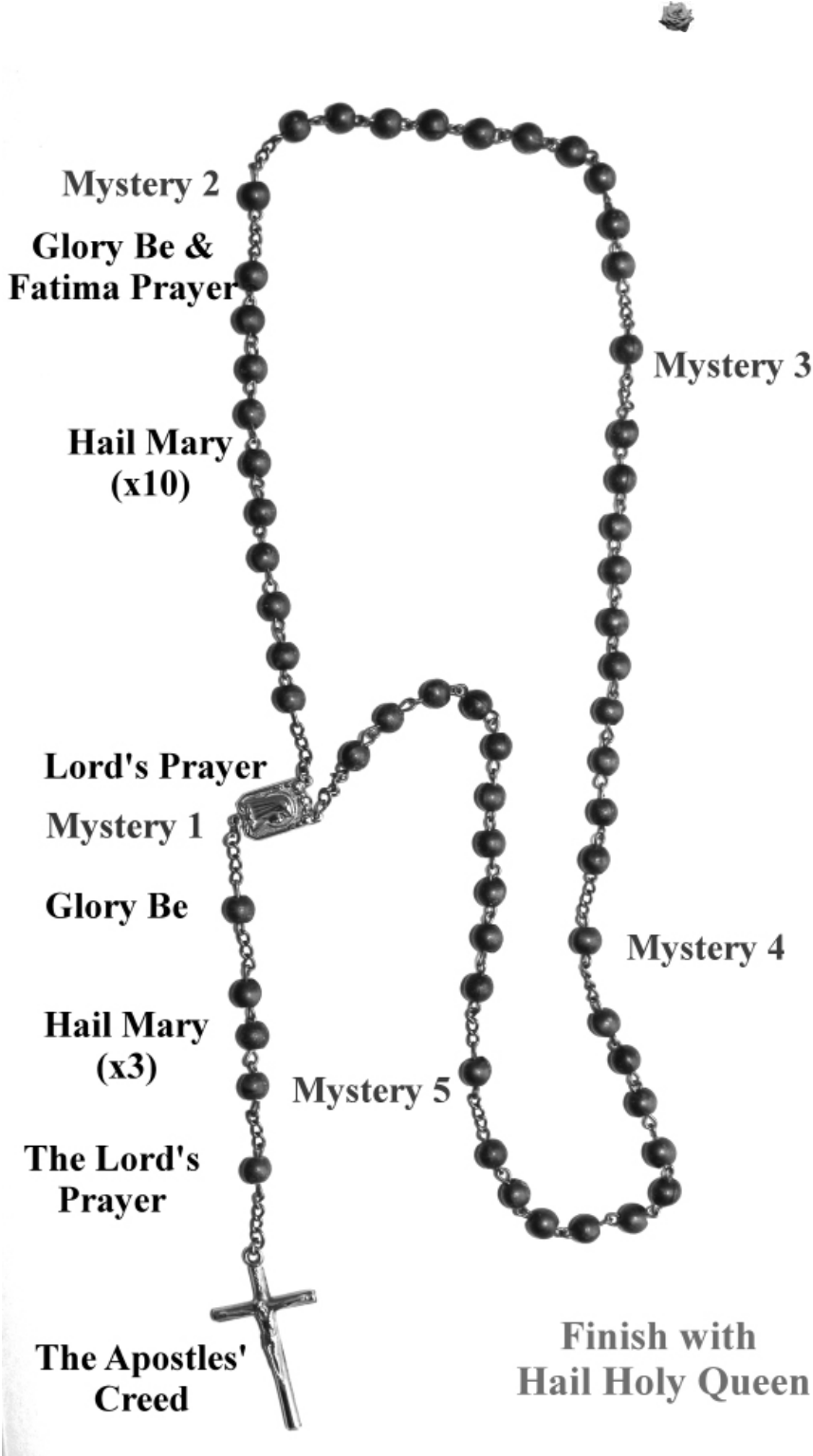
Glory Be to The Father

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

Hail Holy Queen

Hail, Holy Queen, Mother of Mercy! Our life, our sweetness, our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve, to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this valley of tears. Turn then, most gracious advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us; and after this, our exile show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O clement, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary. Pray for us, O Holy Mother of God, That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ.

Joyful Mysteries (Pray on Mon. & Sat)	Luminous Mysteries (Pray on Thursday)	Sorrowful Mysteries (Pray on Tues. & Fri)	Glorious Mysteries (Pray on Wed. & Sun)
1. Annunciation	1. Christ's Baptism in the Jordan	1. Agony in the Garden	1. Resurrection
2. Visitation	2. Wedding at Cana	2. Scourging at the Pillar	2. Ascension into Heaven
3. Birth of Jesus	3. Proclamation of the Kingdom	3. Crowning with Thorns	3. Descent of the Holy Spirit
4. Presentation in the Temple	4. Transfiguration	4. Carrying of the Cross	4. Assumption
5. Finding the child Jesus	5. Institution of the Eucharist	5. Crucifixion	5. Crowning of Our Blessed Lady



Mapping the Hourly Wage Needed to Rent a 2-Bedroom Apartment in Every U.S. State

TANVI MISRA

Yes, the American economy is improving, and yes, we're creating more jobs. But the hourly wages for a lot of these jobs are stagnant at best. According to the Pew Research Center, 30 percent of America's workforce earns a near-minimum-wage salary—that's almost 21 million people. As a cruel paradox, rents across the country keep rising.

A new report by the National Low Income Housing Coalition examines how these opposite trends play out regionally. The work maps how much an American worker needs to earn per hour in each state to rent a two-bedroom apartment. It finds that in no state can a person earning minimum wage afford such an apartment at market rent.

Governor Kate Brown of Oregon sums up the problem in the report's preface:

In my home state of Oregon, and in communities across the country, working families searching for affordable rental units find little to nothing in their price range. There simply isn't enough reasonably priced, decently maintained housing to meet the demand, and rapidly rising rents outpace wages. As a result, one out of four households spends more than half their income on housing costs. People with low or fixed incomes face even bleaker situations.

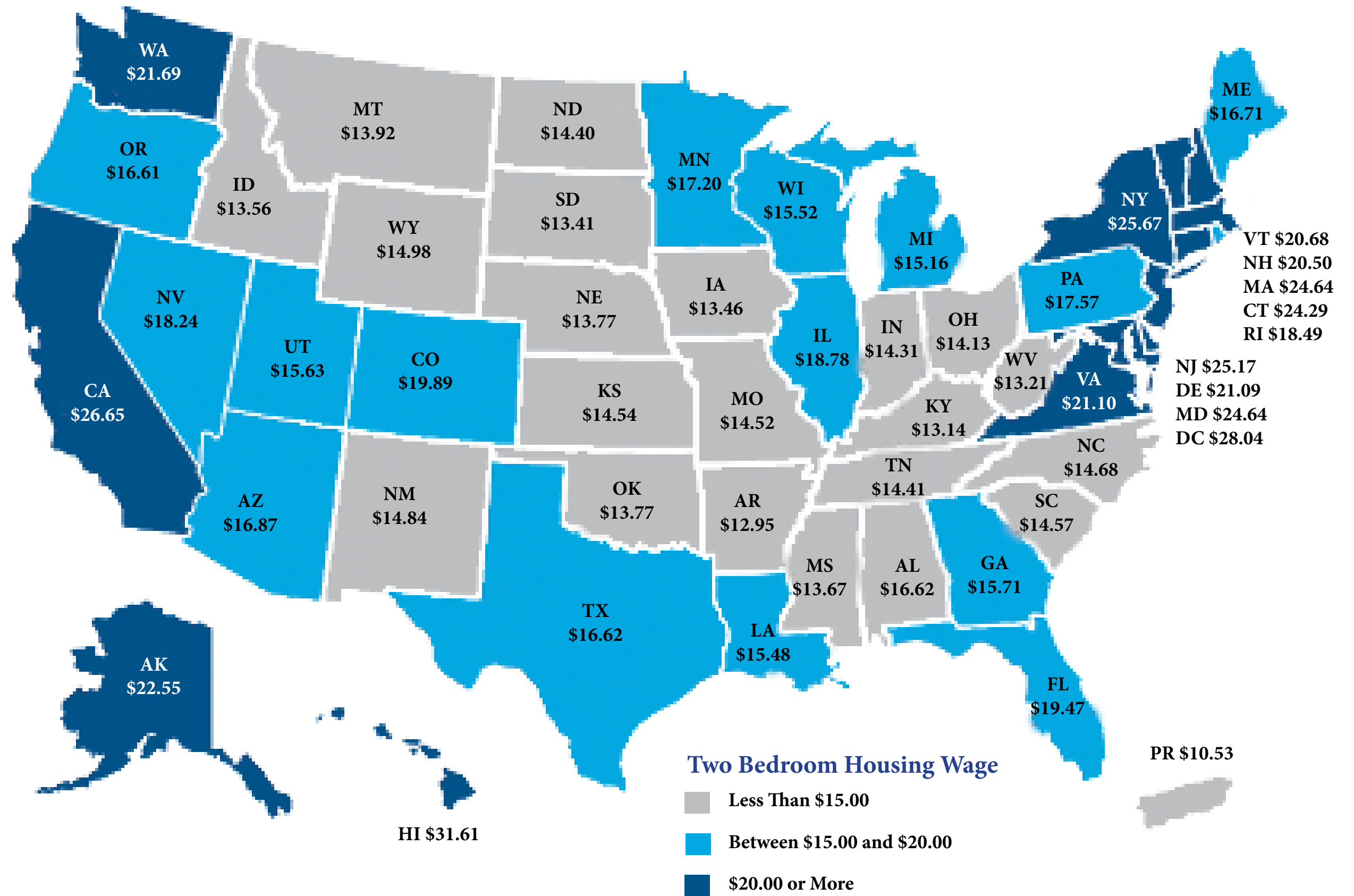
Rents keep rising because the demand for rentals keeps growing, and that's partly because fewer people can afford to buy their homes today than they could before the recession. The low supply of rentals has created a situation where people who definitely can't afford to buy are also priced out of renting.

The tightening rental market has the most significant impact on low income renters. Many higher and middle income renters occupy units that are affordable to lower income groups, reducing the supply of affordable and available decent apartments for the lowest income renters. As a result, in 2013, for every 100 extremely low income (ELI) renter households, there were just 31 affordable and available units.

The report's calculations back up its claim. Currently, an average American needs to earn \$19.35 to afford rent on a two-bedroom unit. That's a few dollars more than the \$15.16 average hourly wage earned by the average American renters, and 2.5 times the federal minimum wage. It's also more than the median hourly wage of the the average American worker, which is \$17.09. For 13 states home to cities with skyrocketing rents—including California, Washington, New York, and Virginia—a person would have to earn well above \$20 per hour to afford a two-bedroom place.

Even a single bedroom apartment isn't cheap—requiring people to earn \$15.50 an hour to rent. Three-quarters of extremely low-income renters (those who earn less than 30 percent of the average median income in an area), for example, pay more than half their salaries toward rent, the report says. For minimum wage renters, \$15.50 is around double what they're earning, which makes renting a one-bedroom out of question.

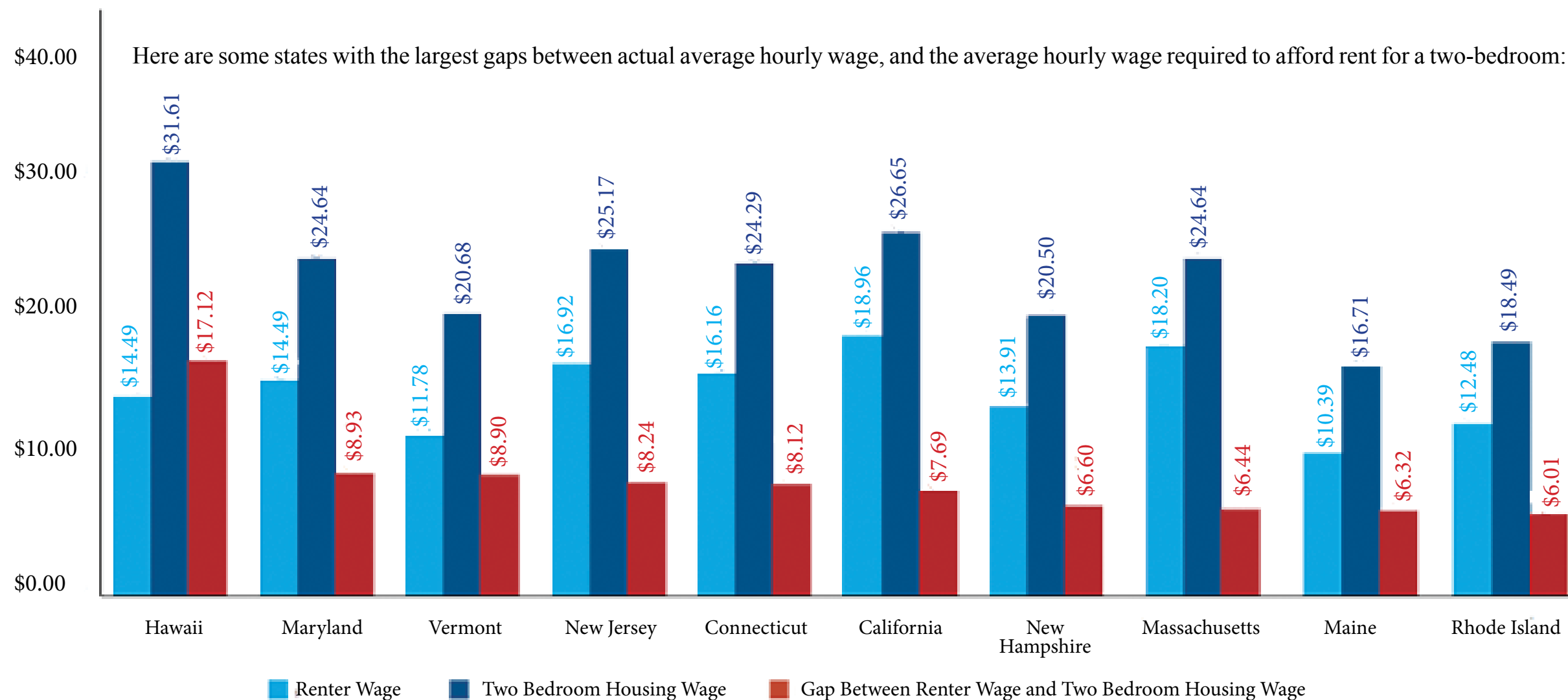
Expanding the nation's affordable housing stock is one obvious solution. Raising the minimum wage, and fixing exploitative scheduling policies for part-time and full-time workers, are others. The National Low Income Housing Coalition report calculated that counties in Washington and Oregon, where state minimum wage is above \$9, were the only ones where a worker earning that much could afford a one-bedroom apartment rent. For people earning a little more than \$7 an hour, making rent for a one-bedroom place would take an average of 85 hours per week; for a two-bedroom, they'd have to work 102 hours per week.



Average Cost of Two Bedroom Apartments in...



- Pensacola- \$750
- Tallahassee- \$799
- Jacksonville- \$1007
- Orlando- \$1117
- Tampa- \$1169
- Fort Lauderdale- \$1852
- Miami- \$2660



Lifting his way out of Homelessness

ANDREA MCCULLAGH

BODYBUILDERS are famous for their orange tans, baby oil and, most importantly, their muscles. Now at sixty years of age Kim Hewitt is entering that world for the very first time.

“The rest of my life has been far fetched so why not,” he laughed.

Mr. Hewitt’s transformation into a muscle-flexing gym junkie has been remarkable.

He suffered two major accidents and spent four years in and out of the hospital, contracting a superbug along the way.

By the time he finished treatment he was bankrupt and homeless.

Mr. Hewitt was working as an engineer when he fell off a building in Chatswood. He damaged his right leg and spent six months in the hospital recovering.

On his release he decided to buy a bicycle.

Four hours later he was in the hospital again after being run over by a car. He broke his back in the accident and spent two years in a wheelchair fearing he would never walk again.

“By the time I was out of the hospital I’d lost everything,” he said.

“I was financially bankrupt. I had a couple of houses and I lost those.

“I’ve gone from being an international engineer to living on the streets.”

The pain wasn’t over as in the hospital he caught the deadly golden staph superbug and a spell in an isolation ward killed it off.

During his time in the hospital he had no one to visit him and he believes this is the reason he went on a downward spiral.

“Why my life fell apart was because I didn’t have any family.”

After living in the back streets of the hospital, Mr. Hewitt found a bed in a homeless shelter in Woolloomooloo and then found a spot in a halfway house.

But things started to change dramatically in 2004 when he joined the gym at Norths in Cammeray.

He weighed in at 299 lbs. and within three years



David Swift

lost 110 lbs.

From overweight and homeless to bodybuilder: an inspirational transformation at 60

lost 110 lbs.

He loved exercise so much he decided to train to become a fitness instructor and got a job straight after graduation teaching aqua aerobics.

“It feels fantastic. I keep thinking I’m fat,” he said.

“I think ‘I can’t do that, I’m overweight’. Then all of a sudden I walk past a shop window and I think ‘I look pretty good’.”

Looks are a key part of body building competitions and Mr. Hewitt has dived head first into a new beauty regimen.

He has already started laser hair removal and also puts hemp seed oil on his face.

“It’s magic stuff ... all my wrinkles are gone,” he said.

Mr. Hewitt has an intensive six-day training schedule to

build his physique for the competition alongside his job as a trainer.

He starts work at 5am and in-between his coaching sessions he fits in two hours solid training in the gym.

He has hired a personal body building coach and is now lifting up to 550 lbs., almost three times his body weight, with his legs.

“I thought I was big and when I go training the girls are bigger than me,” he said.

“When I step into the bodybuilding world I’m just like a little kid.”

Mr. Hewitt now has his own home in Lane Cove and will celebrate his third wedding anniversary with his wife Kathleen in August.

He will be competition ready next year.



Orlando News

Orlando man knits his way out of homelessness

Gregory Patrick is alive because of teddy bears.

Five years ago, the Orlando man left his job in Savannah.

“And I thought that, Oh, anyone would hire me,” he told me. “My arrogance got the best of me. And I found out that was not true.”

Next thing he knew, Patrick ended up at an abandoned piece of property on the Florida-Georgia line. He relied on snail mail for communication. He started knitting, asking his family for help with one thing.

“I said, if you get me online, I promise I can do something with this,” he recalled.

Within 30 minutes, his first bear sold.

“As long as I sold a teddy bear, I could have food.”

With a renewed sense of passion, he soon left the woods and headed to Orlando. Unfortunately, things did not get easier.

“Shelter are dangerous,” he said, with a knowing look. “Not all of them, but some of them can be dangerous. Or going to the weekly hotel over here on Primrose and Colonial is equally dangerous if they’re not fully booked. So sometimes you do decide, well, I’ll just sleep behind Cumberland Farms for the evening.”

Homeless for two years, Patrick knit his way out of homelessness.

“Three years ago, I now have my own apartment I can walk into and say, I’m safe now,” he told me, emotionally.

Behind the small apartment he shares with his boyfriend, Phillip, is a private little sanctuary where they grow tomatoes and just sit.

“I’ll come out here and I’ll make statements



like, what do you think about cleaning that up for me?” he laughs, looking at Phillip.

“Yes, he’s my own little princess,” Phillip said back.

“A redneck princess,” Patrick clarified.

They also have a few bicycles.

“We’ve discovered that you can’t leave them out front because someone will find a way to steal them,” he said, saying it has happened three times.

Patrick now knits four to five bears a week. They sell for \$75.

“Some of the comments that I get on them is they’re kinda sad in a melancholic kind of way,” he said, referring to comments on his blog. “And I remind people, it’s not so much of a sadness - it’s a longing on their face to be held.”

He has published five books, and blogs often. “This is the one true life I’ve ever had where I realize that my own two hands,” he said, “allowed me to survive.”

Tampa News

Homeless ‘piano man’ attracts attention

Josh Cascio

There’s something remarkable about Donald Gould, but you may miss it at first glance.

“What I hope to accomplish is to touch a lot of people. Make them feel good,” Gould said.

He says he’s been musically-inclined since he was little.

“Ever since I was a kid there was a piano in the house. I would always bang on it,” he continued.

Music has always been a big part of his life. He says he played while in the Marines and through some college, but ultimately drugs and alcohol landed him on the streets in Sarasota.

He spends his days in front of pianos placed around the city as part of a public art project.

“It passes a lot of time and I’m homeless; that’s my hustle out here,” he told FOX 13.

Monday, video of Donald playing was posted to Facebook. Overnight, it went viral with over 1.5 million views and over 60,000 shares.



“Overwhelming -- I don’t know what to say,” Gould said when told about the video.

He hopes people can see beyond his rough exterior to what’s hidden on the inside.

“Mostly what I want them to see is the pure music I play and the passion,” he added.

“What I hope to accomplish is to touch a lot of people. Make them feel good”

Insurance Benefits that prevents Homelessness!

After 30 years as an insurance agent, I am writing this article to share with you that I believe insurance products such as Critical Illness, Accident, Hospital, and Cancer Indemnity plans are more valuable than Health Insurance. Health Insurance is necessary but consider the following:

You're in a movie theatre and notice that your hospital administrator and your doctor are sitting in front of you with their families. Suddenly gunshots ring out and you jump up and take the administrator and his family to safety. You then return and take your doctor and his family to safety. Finally you come back for your family. REALLY?

Could you survive the catastrophic costs of a major illness? Even if you survive-could your finances survive? Fifty percent of all bankruptcies & home foreclosures are caused by such medical expenses, when 80% of them had health insurance.

Ask yourself this question? If faced with a critical illness-What are the most important monthly bills to pay? Would you and your family need help with the Mortgage, Out-of-Pocket medical expenses, car, food, electric, H2O, etc...? Or how about actually trying to pay your Health Insurance Premiums? This would definitely not be a good time to lapse that policy!

Supplemental policies pay cash directly to you, to be used anyway you choose. You can buy policies with \$5,000 to \$50,000 or more in benefits. Wouldn't you rather get a check instead of a get well card? Make sure you and YOUR FAMILY get PAID first.

Contact me, George Preacher, Certified Medical Insurance Consultant at 954-880-2240 for more information!

The Homeless Voice is looking for a group of volunteers to gather donations in our name. You can put teams together and raise funds or products for the shelter. We need a team to get together and make plans to search for products. We need one person to contact hotels to get sheets, blankets, bed spreads and LED light bulbs.

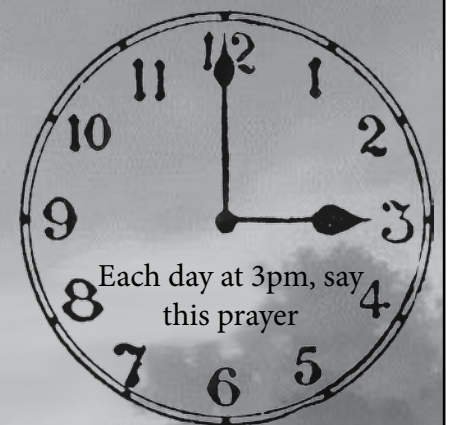
www.homelessvoice.org/volunteer



If interested Please contact
954-924-3571

*It is the Time of Day
To Make Cancer Go Away
Every Day at 3pm This Prayer We Shall Say*

*Dear Lord, we ask that you send us a cure
To make all our bodies pure
To the Devil we say
Your cancer is done
To Jesus we pray
For all cancers be gone
Dear Lord we claim
This in Your Holy Name*



It is our goal that this catches on and before you know it thousands will be praying each day for a world prayer to stop cancer and for there to be a cure for all cancers.

To my sweetheart, this is for you and know that I love you and thank you for helping me all these years making our shelter system grow and grow and not only helping me with the homeless but just being by my side all these years. I love you, you know who you are.

Love, Sean

Instead Of Going To Prom, This Teen Decided To Help The Homeless

Taylor Pittman

Ashley Yong knew her dad wasn't going to pay for prom, so she started saving money. But when it finally came time to prepare for the big night, the high school student didn't spend the money she saved on the perfect dress or even a prom ticket. Instead, she used it to make a much longer lasting impact.

The 17-year-old from Darien, Ill., skipped her senior prom to help homeless people in her community. She spent the money she saved for the dance on items like socks, toothbrushes and food and packed them into 20 boxes. Then, she personally delivered them.

Ashley said she decided to ditch her prom experience after spending hours on Pinterest searching for inspiration for her dress, hair and makeup.

"After a while, I realized what I was doing was pretty vain and self-absorbed," she said in an email to The Huffington Post. "I was so consumed in figuring out how to make one night the best night of my life."

Ashley admits she was sad as she saw pictures of her friends at prom on April 25, but once she distributed her boxes on April 26, she knew her project was worth it. She said the homeless people were "incredibly kind and grateful." A specific encounter with a woman and two children left a lasting impression.

"Her smile said it all, and my heart burst with happiness," Ashley said. "As my dad and I drove away from the children excitedly rummaging through the boxes, I started crying. I told my dad I couldn't believe how blessed we were."

Since completing the project, Ashley has received love and support from teachers, fellow students and even strangers. She has also received criticism from people at her school saying she did it for attention. According to Ashley, they're right. She did do it for attention, but not for herself. She did the project to raise awareness for homeless people and filmed it all to prove that giving back can be easy.

"I'm a high schooler with no job, car or really anything I own to sustain myself," she said. "Giving isn't hard, and it most definitely is not impossible."

Ashley spent \$214.74 of the \$250 she saved on products for the homeless and plans on using the rest for her next distribution, which will be a bigger project thanks to her successful GoFundMe campaign. She's already raised \$300, exceeding her \$200 goal. She also wants to expand her impact by starting a nonprofit organization to help homeless people when she is older.

"I want to get involved in the cause for which I am advocating giving my own time and work, not just my money. It's the experiences you have hands-on volunteering and meeting people that make you a better person, not putting money into a cup."



Meatless Monday- Basil Summer Rolls with Peanut Dipping Sauce

Ingredients

8 ounces extra-firm tofu, drained
 1 1/2 ounces uncooked rice vermicelli noodles
 5 teaspoons rice vinegar, divided
 2 tablespoons lower-sodium soy sauce, divided
 2 tablespoons dark sesame oil
 1 1/2 tablespoons hoisin sauce, divided
 2 teaspoons sambal oelek (ground fresh chile paste)
 1 cup very thinly sliced napa (Chinese) cabbage
 3/4 cup matchstick-cut carrot
 1/2 cup presliced shiitake mushroom caps
 2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves
 8 (8-inch) round rice paper sheets
 8 large basil leaves
 4 green onions, each cut into 2 (4-inch) slices
 1 1/2 tablespoons chunky peanut butter
 1 tablespoon water

Preparation

1. Cut tofu crosswise into 4 slices. Place tofu on several layers of paper towels. Cover with additional paper towels. Let stand 10 minutes, pressing down occasionally. Cut each slice in half to form 8 (3-inch) strips.

2. Cook noodles according to package directions. Drain and rinse with cold water; drain.

3. Combine 1 tablespoon vinegar, 1 tablespoon soy sauce, oil, 1 1/2 teaspoons hoisin sauce, and sambal oelek in a medium bowl, stirring with a whisk. Stir in cabbage, carrot, mushrooms, and mint; toss gently to coat.

4. Add hot water to a large shallow dish to a depth of 1 inch. Place 1 rice paper sheet in dish; let stand 30 seconds or until soft. Place a dry kitchen towel on a work surface. Place rice paper sheet on towel. Place 1 basil leaf on bottom third of sheet, leaving a 2-inch border; top with 1 tofu slice, about 3 tablespoons cabbage mixture, about 2 tablespoons noodles, and 1 onion slice. Fold bottom of sheet over filling. Fold sides of sheet over filling; starting with filled side, roll up, jelly-roll fashion. Gently press seam to seal. Place roll, seam side down, on a serving platter (cover to keep from drying). Repeat procedure with remaining wrappers, basil, tofu, cabbage mixture, noodles, and onion.

5. Combine remaining 2 teaspoons vinegar, remaining 1 tablespoon soy sauce, remaining 1 tablespoon hoisin, peanut butter, and 1 tablespoon water in a small bowl, stirring with a whisk. Serve with summer rolls. ~Cooking Light



Made from a simple combination of rice flour, water, and salt, rice paper has about 30 calories per 8-inch round--that's 80% less than the same size flour tortilla. While filling one summer roll, let another rice paper soak.

Or send your check to Angel Program * PO Box 292-577 * Davie, FL 33329

Go to pg 2 to cut out the mail in membership form

WWW.HOMELESSVOICE.ORG/MEMBER

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✓ You or your business name will appear in the Homeless Voice Newspaper, which currently has over 100,000 copies in circulation.

✓ Have piece of mind in knowing that you helped keep a homeless family off the streets.

Membership Benefits

Become a monthly angel and for only **50 cents per day**, you can keep a homeless family off the streets.



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