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The Advocate

eNews

NCH Newsletter

December 21, 2010



National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day

Season Greetings {FIRST_NAME|Friend},

During the past month, more than one-hundred and fifty communities representing forty-five states and Puerto Rico have written to confirm that they will be having a [homeless memorial service](#). Many of the communiqués, though brief, capture both fond recollections and profound losses and separation: the love for those they've served comes through so clearly and perfectly.

Tonight, we will memorialize a litany of individuals who died while homeless this year. The service in [Washington DC](#) is both a local event for those who died in the metropolitan area and a national memorial for people across America who died without a place to call home.

While preparing for the memorial service, a good friend called who had just finished organizing the annual census for my home town. The names and faces of men and women, "The homeless of Boston", flooded my memory: Danny, Charles, Jack and Penny – Walter, Sue, Mitch and Richie – David, Wayne, Angel and Winston: members of an extraordinary extended family.

Annually, we count those who are un-housed, to know and serve them better. We memorialize our homeless brothers and sisters, who died during the year, knowing all too painfully that doing our best has never been enough to prevent the inevitable.

This holiday season, we can commit to giving the invaluable gift of presence: the state of being with those whom we live with and serve. This commitment can be difficult in a culture that often fails



Give the gift of home this holiday season. Give online, or text NCH to 85944 and reply YES to make a \$10 donation to Bring America Home.

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day Resolution



Congressman Alcee L. Hastings (D-FL) introduced a House Concurrent Resolution expressing Congress's support of the goals and ideals of National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day.

"Winter is a notoriously difficult time of year for homeless people," said Hastings, who

to value your presence over their presents. But, the struggle will be undeniable worth it.

We can't relive our lives or bring back those we've lost. No matter how much we hope or pray, our lives don't provide us with "do over(s)". But with this in mind, we can change how we live each day: we can make ourselves available to those we serve, uninterrupted, fully, being with them at one time and in one place.

If we all can fulfill the commitment of being present to those we serve, each future census will act as a marker for conversations held and relationships built and future Homeless Memorial Services will be a time to remember and celebrate lives better known and understood.

- Neil Donovan, NCH Executive Director

NCH Speakers Continue to Inspire

In our last newsletter, we told you about NCH speaker, George Silletti, who inspired a group of college students from Birmingham Southern College to hold a sock drive to help the homeless in their community.

After attending a Faces of Homelessness presentation during a service trip in May 2010, student Darin Robillard was inspired to do more. He went back to his school and organized a sold-out awareness banquet as a part of a week-long series of events during National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week this past November.

NCH's Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau was invited to this banquet, and in the words of the speakers:

"I have witnessed in action what one person can do to make a difference. With all the attentive faces in the audience, and the earnest questions and thank yous after our presentation, I could see the effect that Darin's efforts had had on all those in attendance."

- Sheila Melvin

"Through the actions of these students for the first time I truly believe that homelessness can be eliminated in this country and perhaps with the energy of these Young Lions the problem can be solved globally."

- Jesse Smith

To learn more about National Hunger & Homelessness Awareness Week, visit NCH's website

serves as the Co-Founder and Co-Chairman of the Congressional Caucus on Homelessness. "Furthermore, the spirit of the holiday season provides an opportunity for promoting compassion and concern for all, especially the homeless."

[Read more about the homeless persons memorial day resolution on the blog.](#)

NCH in the News

Washington Post (Dec. 13) - [Homeless man in D.C. uses Facebook, social media to advocate for others like him](#)

New York Times (Dec. 12) - [Los Angeles Confronts Homelessness Reputation](#)

The Rotunda: Student Newspaper of Longwood University (Dec. 1) - [Faces of Homelessness Speakers' Bureau](#)

Market Watch (Nov. 23) - [Lands' End Shares the Warmth with a \\$35,000 Donation to the National Coalition for the Homeless](#)

USA Today (Nov. 11) - [More cities offer homeless free storage to ease mobility](#)



Happy Holidays, and thank you

NCH's Holiday Season Wish List

- **Resourcefulness** to Prevent, Reduce and End America's Homelessness
- **Respect** to Honor the Intentions and Generosity of our Donors and Volunteers
- **Courage** to Pursue Effective and Lasting Solutions for Families Living in Persistent Poverty
- **Wisdom** to Actively Listen to our Homeless Brothers and Sisters
- **Commitment** to Remember Every Veteran Who's Made it to our Shores, But Never Home
- **Responsibility** to Hold One Another Accountable to Care for Those Least Among Us
- **Power** to Wake Each Morning Committed to **Bringing America Home**

...Make this Wish List **Your Call-to-Action** this Holiday Season!

for your ongoing support and partnership in our work to Bring America Home!

Michael Stoops

Nail Megan

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