



On the margin

Philip F. Mangano, executive director of the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness

- "There may be many ways into homelessness, but there's only one way out. That's to find a place to live."

Every Tuesday "**One Stop**" Homeless Services, 10:00 AM - 1:00 PM, 3147 Loma Vista, Ventura

Twenty-six computers are available for free public Internet use at the **E.P. Foster Library** at 651 E. Main St. Some computers are filtered for use by customers under 18. A coin-op printer is also available.

AN OLD PAIR OF SHOES

On the banks of the River Santa Rosa
Among the weeds and mariposa
Where defeated men drink the wine and booze
Stand an old pair of shoes

Someone wore those shoes month ago
Perhaps in February when there was snow.
But where is he now when weather's warm?
Alive and well, or still forlorn?

Are his clothes ragged, and his feet dirty?
Not right for a man perhaps just 30....
The age of Christ when Magdalen did entreat
Her savior to let her wash His feet.

So let's be truly helpful when next we meet
Some poor guy begging on the street
Rather than give him money, so something really
good
Let's get him a place to live, as we should.

Gerald McGuire
Ventura, CA

"One City One Fund" – 2009

In our efforts to end homelessness, it fills us with hope as to what can be accomplished when the community comes together to help their neighbors in need. The One City One Fund event over Valentine and President's Day weekend was a huge success.

Approximately 90 donations were made totaling \$10,000. From the donations of Saticoy School Rm. 9 second graders and 12 year old Joseph Danker's Mitvah project to those contributed by businesses, churches and service organizations, the \$10,000 raised this weekend will make it possible for 10-20 Ventura households facing one-time economic hardship to maintain their housing and avoid homelessness. We are deeply grateful.

Since June 2007 the **Ventura Homeless Prevention Fund (VHPF)** has provided assistance that enabled 65 Ventura households maintain their housing. Over 140 individuals, including senior citizens, families with children, singles and married couples, from a wide variety of ethnic backgrounds, have been able to stay housed because of the VHPF.

Web site

"When you are on a computer connected to the Internet, you can find helpful stuff at www.OneCityVentura.org For example, "2. Do YOU need assistance? If so, please click here ..." will take you to a long page of help like the "One Stop", food, showers and laundry, jobs, AA, etc. Each listing has an address and phone number. This web site was created by volunteers to help everyone working to end homelessness in the City of Ventura. Use it, and be well.
(editor's note: If you have articles or ideas for this newsletter you can contact the VSSTF through the website)

"So I think that the two groups of people who will ultimately end homelessness in this country are the homeless people themselves, who will not necessarily be marching in the streets but will be getting involved with helping themselves and one another, and young people who will be making those connections at an early age when they do volunteer work."

Michael Stoops, executive director of the National Collation for the Homeless (source: What's Next: The Experts' Guide: Predictions from 50 of America's Most Compelling People - by Jane Buckingham)



No one knows what he can do until he tries.

Martin came to the U.S. in 1984 with fourteen other people, including children. Lost without landmarks or directions, they walked for seven days without shelter, food, or water. Martin was the only one who survived. He was found unconscious by immigration officials and was taken to a hospital

After his recovery he found a job picking strawberries in Bakersfield. After working for three months without pay, he asked the contractor, "Where is the money you owe me?" "Get out of here! I don't even know you!" was the response. "I'm calling immigration now!"

Martin left quickly, tired and broke. He headed for Ventura, and discovered the Harbor Church, and the many people receiving hospitality there: good food, friendship, and counsel.

Martin asked the Church "How can I help, what job can I do?" The church told Martin that "so much needs to be done that we will pay you to help. Many things need repair, need to be organized ..."

Martin's response has been "No, thank you. I don't want to be paid. I like to work and I want to help. That is all I need." So that is what Martin is doing.

- from The Unitarian Universalist Church's "Lift Up Your Voice" project (<http://www.uuventura.org/luyv>) - a collaborative approach to working with the homeless and marginalized segments of our community to end homelessness.)



"One City" Thanksgiving Day - 2008

Monetary Blindness

Through golden windows you fail to see
the dreams you poach from honest folks
and people once happy like me.
With rules you bought
you can't be fought
by wrinkled blistered hands.
Still the blood I bleed and tears I cry
will fill your coffers full.
A river of tears cannot wash your hands clean
of the families you've robbed
of their hopes with your schemes,
and faceless names don't haunt your dreams
nor hungry children with silent screams.
But in the end you cannot win.
Your gain is of this earth.
For then you'll find what's yours and mine
is what we're given at birth.

Daniel C. Griess