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Candlelight Vigil Held In Portland To Remember The Homeless

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PORTLAND (NEWS CENTER) -- This year, 29 people from Portland who were homeless or had once been homeless, died. They were remembered in a candlelight vigil Friday evening. People gathered at the Preble Street Resource Center to light candles and then walked to Monument Square in downtown Portland. Mark Swann, the executive director of the Center, says that all too often the homeless are forgotten, and when they die, there are no funerals or other tributes.

Swann says the candlelight vigil is held every December 21st, the longest night of the year.

He also says that the number of people who are living on the streets of Portland has decreased for the first time in 20 years. Swann attributes that to the opening of Logan Place, a permanent housing complex for men who are chronically homeless. That, says Swann, is the good news.

The bad news, he says, is that now that the YWCA has been torn down there is no shelter for women. The Y once provided a temporary living space for more than 60 women. For now, about 50 women a night are sleeping above the soup kitchen at the Preble Street Resource Center.

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